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ARTICLES

BOOK REVIEWS

Diaspora, Trans-Nation and Nation: Reflections from India*

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I feel greatly honoured to be invited to deliver the Ninth Professor M.N. Srinivas Memorial Lecture and I thank the Indian Sociological Society, particularly its President, Professor Uttam Bhoite for this honour. In addressing my thoughts towards a lecture in memory of Professor Srinivas, I cannot but recall two ordinary instances which imprint in me his wisdom, humility, and alacrity of mind. The year was 1978 and Professor Srinivas was a member of the selection committee that appointed me Professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University. Among the questions and comments made by the experts on that occasion, the one offered by Professor Srinivas has always jogged my memory. In that interview, though he was not himself an expert in the study of Indian diaspora (an expression that is somewhat of a neologism, and was then known by the more descriptive terms 'Overseas Indians' or 'Indians Abroad'), Professor Srinivas, apropos my PhD work among Indians in Malaya, observed, 'Don't we adults learn a lot about the contemporary world from our children and grandchildren born abroad?' I could not agree with him more. But, more than that, his remark flashed in my mind some sentences from The *Remembered Village* (1976a). Writing about his initial days of fieldwork in Rampura, Professor Srinivas says: 'Everyone, from the very old to young boys and girls, took a hand in trying to lessen my ignorance, vast as it was. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration that the entire village participated in the education of one urban adult' (*ibid.*: 53). The second instance is more pedagogical and indirect: this is my reading of his two lectures on *Nation Building in Independent India* (Srinivas 1976 b). What I find truly remarkable about his narrative in these lectures is the straightforward, non-polemical but extremely informative, refreshing, and succinct treatment of a vast

subject, and a politically· sensitive one at that, considering that these lectures were delivered in the shadow of the infamous Emergency. As we all know, that subject in our own time is hotly debated and nettled all over by the global theorists of 'post-nation' and the death of patriotism. I recall both these instances in a spirit of humility, since, in what follows, I am going to traverse some of the same ground, though ostensibly in a much more pedantic way. From the vantage point of the process of modern diaspora and its socio-cultural impact on transmigrants, I focus on the tension between nation[1] ·and ·trans-nation in our globalised world. Ironically, the analysis of Indian diaspora in these terms reveals the strengthening of the power of the nation-states where the transmigrants settle. I conclude with the lessons learnt from this specific discourse of globalisation for sociological and social anthropological probe into the institutions of tribe and caste in India embroiled in fast-changing political processes of the nation-state. I have taken up both the empirical and methodological dimensions of the subject at hand.

Diaspora

The Indian case belongs to the wider class of diasporas (other examples include the Jewish, Chinese, and Armenian). Until its 1993 edition, the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* defined the term 'diaspora' as 'the dispersion of the Jews among the Gentile nations' and as 'all·those Jews who live outside the biblical land of Israel'. Yet, for the first time in its long history, in that edition, the *Dictionary* added that the term also refers to 'the situation ·of people ·living outside their traditional homeland'. The term has a Greek origin and refers, allegorically, to· the scattering of seeds as they are sown over a̅ wide area. G. Sheffer (2003: 9) is right in noting that, already at a very early period, the term has been applied to ·two of the oldest ethno-national transmigrations – the Jewish and the Greek – that had been established outside of their homelands as a result of either voluntary or forced migrations.

There has been frequent criticism of the usages 'diaspora', 'diasporic', 'diasporism', etc. on the grounds that the generalisation and univer-salisation of culturally specific, namely, Jewish or Greek, processes are illegitimate. More particularly, it has been argued that the persecution of diasporics either in the home or in host societies which is a recurrent feature·of Jewish transmigration is absent or even reversed in cases of ruling Anglo-Saxon minority settler societies, namely, in Australia or South Africa. This criticism is legitimate, but the use· of the term 'diaspora' as a ·concept· in the social sciences and the humanities is justified if we bear iñ mind its 'polythetic' character (cf. Needham 1975).

Even empirically, the majority of diasporics worldwide constitute minority groups in their societies of settlement and, therefore, remain unprivileged and embattled. We would, therefore, continue to use 'diaspora' and its derivatives as terms of art, more like the anthropological terms 'totem' or 'taboo'.

William Safran's six-point model (1991: 83-84) that lays down the features of diaspora include dispersal from the original homeland, retention of collective memory, vision or myth of the original homeland, partial (never complete) assimilation in host society, idealised wish to return to original homeland, desirable commitment to restoration of homeland, and continually renewed linkages with homeland. The debate on qualifying criterion for diaspora continues with some scholars offering wide, inclusivist definitions that contain 'immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest worker, exile community, overseas community and ethnic community in the semantic domain of transmigration' (Tololian 1991: 4-5). Others have proposed a minimised working definition for diaspora that includes 'dispersal from original homeland to two or more places; movement between the homeland and the new host and; social, cultural or economic exchange between or among the diaspora community' (Van Hear 1998: 6).

The last definition covers the criterion of 'circulation' suggested by C. Markovits (2000), though he would further argue that 'diaspora' in the Indian instance is something of a misnomer, given the extensive, ongoing circulation and exchange that has historically characterised the trajectories of many overseas Indians. Interestingly, authors like Thomas Blom Hansen (2002) claim the unsuitability of the notion of 'diaspora' for South African Indians for precisely the opposite reason. According to him, the nostalgia for Indian roots and any engagement for what is authentically Indian is belied by the experience of present-day third, fourth generation South African Indians, amongst whom the propaganda of being patriotically 'Indian' is being drummed in (rather unsuccessfully) by the erstwhile BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) government and organisations like the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) and GOPIO (Global Organisation of the People of Indian Origin). This may well be the experience of many other PIOs (People of Indian Origin) as contrasted with the commodified nostalgia of the kind that is visible among the first and second generation non-resident Indians (NRIs) in Europe or North America who belong to more recent waves of migration.

Analysts of diaspora have argued that the phenomenon of transmigration covered by the concept may usefully be conceived as occurring in 'space' rather than 'place' (for example, nation-state). This is patently so in the case of twice/thrice migrants, for example, the

Gujarati migrants from East Africa to UK, USA, and Canada; the Sikhs making several moves from one country to another; Fijian Indians who have settled in Australia, New Zealand, and USA; or the transmigration of Tamilians worldwide following political upheavals in the territories of their settlement. These transmigrants may retain ties with the original homeland or they may not; Fijian Indians, for example, are an interesting case in this regard: neither India nor Fiji as nation-states may be part of their 'belonging' (for example, citizenship status), but these territories may be etched in their 'longing' for a home or in what Vijay Mishra (1995) has called their 'diasporic imaginary'. In this we recognise the relevance of the last of Safran's characteristics of diaspora, 'they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to the homeland in one way or another, and their ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship' (1991: 83-84). And, as analysts relating diaspora to global movements have shown, though severed or cut loose, in what we have called 'belonging' (in a jural or legal sense), from any single nation-state or other 'referent origin' (Dufoix 2008), the diasporic immigrant may become an active agent in ethnic, linguistic, regional, or any other political movement of a trans-national character (for examples, see Sokefeld 2006). These networks in 'diaspora space' (Brah 1996) have both vertical (homeland-'host' societies) and horizontal (inter-'host' societies) spread.[2]

Trans-nation

It would have by now become clear that modern diasporas, including the Indian diaspora, cannot be understood except in the context of transmigration, trans-nation and trans-state frameworks. We use the prefix 'trans' instead of the usual 'inter' (for example, international or interstate) in order to signal, to use the currently fashionable 'multilateral' rather than 'bilateral' (to speak nothing of the critique of the 'unilateral' imperialistic hegemonic by the global left), relationships *among* rather than *between* nation-states. Furthermore, the prefix 'trans' signifies networks among transmigrants which transcend the boundaries of nation-states altogether. For conventional international relations scholars, this particular characteristic of trans-national relationships is counterintuitive, in the sense that they have always been in the vanguard of the study of state-to-state phenomena whereas these networks demand *qualitative analysis* which lies outside their normal expertise and demands collaboration of other social scientists, in particular sociologists and anthropologists, in the context of globalisation. We shall pursue this aspect later, but let me focus a little more on the methodological issue

involved. For example, among the political science scholars of diaspora such as Sheffer (1986, 2003) the pioneering efforts have been mainly descriptive and classificatory. Such efforts, if we may echo the critique of another diaspora scholar, Axel (2001), an anthropologist, who often tells us a good deal about the sending and receiving nation-states of migrants (and 'international' relations between them). But, more often than not, the characteristics of the diaspora phenomenon *sui generis* escape their analytical net. This is because, as S. Dufoix (2008) explains and Axel (2001) argues in detail, the political processes imbricated in defining international and trans-national relations of nation-states and their actors are not only volatile and constantly changing, but often remain hidden on account of their extremely sensitive and contentious character. Thus, if we look at some of the burning examples of trans-national migrants, typically, refugees and asylum-seekers (the Tamils, Sikhs, Fijian Indians, Mohajirs, Kurds, Afghans, Burmese, Nepalis, and Tibetans to name only a few), their status as diasporics defies cut-and-dried categorisation into 'types' or even 'ideal-types', so caught up they are in the vicissitudes of their existential dilemmas.[3]

Glick Schiller describes trans-national migration as 'a pattern of migration in which persons, although they move across international borders and settle and establish social relations in a new state, maintain social connections with the polity from which they originated ... they live across international borders in trans-national social fields' (1999: 117). In what follows I shall treat trans-nationalism as a sub-set of globalisation.

Globalisation entails global markets, global communications, and global networks. Globalisation, as the very term implies, covers societies at all phases of development, namely, in this case the nation-state of India as well as the countries to which Indian diasporics have migrated. The process of globalisation is driven by three major imperatives – the market, the new technology, and trans-national networks – that are themselves interconnected. Market forces are in theory based on free and fair competition, but protectionist policies in trade, volatility and negative effects of short-term capital flows, and biases in international investment agreements permeate and vitiate the field to widen the hiatus between the developed and the developing countries. While this is the macro-picture, closer to our concerns are the phenomena of speculators manipulating financial markets and cartels of nation-states of the North making policy decisions in institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation to the disadvantage of countries of the South and cornering advantages in what should otherwise, in theory, be a level playing field (cf. Khor 2001).

As to the local effects of these forces, there is conspicuous increment in what has been called 'the consumption of modernity' which in a poor country may be termed as 'unbridled consumerism' (Jain 1998). Although market forces are, theoretically, determined through the balancing of demand and supply, the propensity of heavy consumption as compared to production in the play of market mechanism in an underdeveloped country like India may be explained by what one of my informants (an Indian petroleum engineer settled in Houston, USA) put it as the excess of down-streaming (distribution and consumption or, in other words, buying) as against upstreaming (production and selling) in the flows of world markets. These processes of participation in the market and marketplace particularly characterise middle-class behaviour in both urban India and in the new diaspora.

Let us look at the technological revolution which constitutes the second major dimension of the socio-cultural impact of globalisation in India and the diaspora. In both its real (locomotionary) and virtual (tele-communication) senses, transmigration is about travel (Clifford 1997). It is travel in the various forms – the capacity to physically travel very fast and repeatedly, and the capacity of travel virtually through 'works of the imagination' (Appadurai 1997), which has brought transmigration as a compelling theme in our day and age. However, technology has played a catalytic role in all this. Especially, information technology (IT) is leading to a new form of capital accumulation, as is clearly evident in the IT industry itself. Regardless of its origin and amount, capital can be circulated and accumulated on a global scale, at an unprecedented speed, and, therefore, with extreme volatility. An urgent task of the study of globalisation and migration is to understand the international labour system of the 'new economy'. In this context, unlike in the colonial past, it is capital chasing labour rather than the other way round. The structure of this 'chase' is admirably delineated in a recent ethnographic study of the agents that have been the main means by which the Indian IT professionals move globally (Xiang 2001: 23-90). Biao Xiang conducted this field-study initially among the Indian IT professionals' migration to Australia through spells of fieldwork in Sydney and Hyderabad. He later theorised this trans-national stratum of Indian migrants to Australia as an 'ethnic trans-national middle class in formation' (Xiang 2002). This exercise shows not only the spatio-temporal discontinuity, but also, most interestingly, certain ethno-practical continuities between the old and new diaspora of Indians.

Let us introduce the third major imperative of globalisation, namely, trans-national networks. According to Stanley J. Tambiah (2000: 140), two broad sets of networks may be differentiated for purposes of analysis.

'Vertical' networks are formed within 'host' societies when 'communities' are constituted, either voluntarily or forcefully, in order to devise conscious strategies to fight discrimination as well as to succeed economically. The second set of networks, that is, 'lateral' may be subdivided further: (a) between host society and society of origin/homeland, and (b) trans-national global networks, where transmigrations across the world communicate with each other and maintain trans-national links especially through media and travel. What is lacking in Tambiah's concept of networks, however, is the dimension of social stratification, which we may analyse in terms of class, culture, and mobility in both the old and new diasporas (Jain 2004). To generalise, then, vertical networks are those which ramify across classes – these are inter-class asymmetrical networks – whereas horizontal and symmetrical networks rest on the intra-class solidarity. As regards their embeddedness, diasporic networks cut across locations, because, as pointed out earlier, these are configured in 'space' rather than fixed in 'places' (de Certeau 1984) though locations are created (cf. Bhabha on 'location of culture' [1994], and 'social space' in Lefebvre's sense [1991]) in the process of social life. In concrete terms, then, transmigration constitutes a space *sui generis*. As we shall see, Xiang's empirical demonstration of the formation of an 'ethnic trans-national middle class' supports my conceptualisation. To cautiously generalise further, a network analysis of globalisation process enables one to look at it from 'below' and 'above'; the exhortation, therefore, to 'think global and act local', from the perspective of underdeveloped societies is not innocent of its cutting edge of class connotation.

Contemporaneously, trans-nation exists in tension with the nation, and this impinges on the opportunity-horizons of the transmigrants, their advantages and disadvantages. As Dufoix (2008) has argued perceptively, being far from home is often a rupture, and for the last two centuries, state authorities and those living far from the referent-origin – state, nation, or territory – have tried to fight it. Put simply, from the viewpoint of the transmigrants and their referent-origin, particularly the nation-state, there is the simultaneity and reciprocal dynamic of 'holding on and letting go'. To understand this dynamic, let me examine a little closely the governmental context of transmigration, namely, the management of democracy and cultural difference in the nation-state. In the trans-nation (or more precisely, trans-state) arena this implies finding solutions to xenophobia of the native population vis-à-vis migrants and the liberal democratic state persuading its citizenry as a whole to embrace the legal and moral consensus known as multiculturalism. Ironically, the governmental solution in these circumstances, namely, the finding of a consensus

on multiculturalism, is hamstrung by the very characteristics of trans-nationalism. As K. Verdery, admittedly writing from the vantage point of developed western nation-states, puts it:

> In the world of today... a given empirical case realizes the classic nation-state form only imperfectly. Scholars and others have begun to suspect that the modern state form is, if not dying out, undergoing a major reconfiguration. The international weapons trade has made a mockery of the state's monopoly on the means of violence. Capital's extraordinary mobility means that as it moves from areas of higher to areas of lower taxation, many states lose some of their revenue and industrial base, and this constrains their ability to attract capital or shape its flow. The increased flow of capital – and of populations, in its wake, producing the much commented phenomenon of trans-nationalism – calls into question in an unprecedented way all these arbitrary, taken-for-granted nation-state boundaries (1993: 43-44).

Is it any wonder then, that, faced by such overarching contradiction between the nation-state and the trans-nation, the developed nation-state reinforces itself and capitulates, in terms of its own ideology of liberal democratic capitalism and self-interest, to the imperatives of a seriously compromised policy of 'multiculturalism' towards transmigrants? There are clear examples of how the threshold of tolerance and support for transmigrants from culturally different societies in these nation-states (USA, Canada, and Australia, for example) becomes limited, and the ethnic difference of immigrant populations gets irrevocably embroiled in class, gender, and racial discriminations and prejudices of 'host' societies.[5]

While the indirect governmental complicity with unbridled commercial interests is one side of the story, it would be gross over-simplification to treat the Indian transmigrants in their new locale as simply 'victims' of an alien hegemonic order. As I have suggested else-where (see Jain 2008; see also Niranjana 2006), it is useful to explore how the Indian 'caste' consciousness has transformed itself into a 'racial' one through generations of living in the 'old' diaspora of South Africa and Trinidad. And, if we were to learn by the methodological device of Marcel Mauss's 'total social fact' (1990) as applied to the phenomenon of diaspora, a similar impulse is discernible in the post-Obama USA (Shah 2009). The last named of these instances is also entwined with the 'model minority' image of the Indian immigrants in USA (Prashad 2000). As a matter of singular irony, the new identities of Indian transmigrants abroad cut across and transcend their 'inherited' identities and differentiations based on religion, region, caste, language, and even supposedly conservative ('identity-bolstering') political affiliation to fundamentalist

religious organisations (see Shah 2009; see also Hansen 2002 for South Africa).[6]

That these 'primordialist' identities and identifications are retained in the diaspora as diversities without being conflictual or counterproductive for societal integration, while as politicised ethnicities they are so in India itself, is something that Indian government representatives abroad (see Jain 2007a: 391) as well as analysts searching for an 'ideal' Indian unity and solidarity in the diaspora would do well to heed. If anything, it is likely that, if properly handled, the socio-political influence of global sub-ethnic linguistic and regional associations of Indian transmigrants (see Bhat 1993) emphasising 'difference' rather than hierarchy (see Pocock 1957) may lead to something like 'liberalisation' of ethnic anta-gonisms within India itself, something resembling the co-existence of 'nationalities' within China accepted (legitimised?) by the state.[7]

In some of the writings with particular reference to the overarching themes of globalisation and trans-nationalism there is an implicit critique of the terms of celebratory focus on these in the academia and in journalistic writing. Steven Vertovec's timely review, 'Conceiving and Researching Trans-nationalism' (1999) contains valuable insights into the present and future shape of researches in this direction. He mentions, for instance, the emphasis on networks calling into question the traditional definition of the state, which I have elsewhere (see Jain 2002) shown to be the case as regards the Tamilian diaspora in Malaysia. Also Robin Cohen's formulation endorsed by Vertovec that trans-national bonds no longer have to be cemented by exclusive territorial claims is reflected in my highlighting of the processes of 'circulation'. I am also in sympathy with Vertovec's observation that fractured memories of diaspora consciousness produce a multiplicity of histories, 'communities' and selves, and, as he puts it, 'a refusal of fixity often serving as a valuable resource for resisting repressive local or global situations' (1999: 448). My slight disagreement here would be that in certain situations of abject penury, such as that of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in Sri Lankan camps, it is not so much the exercise of resistance as 'coming to terms with' a crisis situation, implying a more reactive than proactive agency for the diasporics. Similarly, while it is well and good for Arjun Appadurai and Carol Breckenridge to think about a contest between 'the politics of desire and imagination and politics of heritage and nostalgia' (cited in Vertovec 1999: 453), in the diasporics' response to the media in trans-national field, there are national and nationalistic images in the mass media of films in India where precisely the accoutrements of mass technology -- cell phones and FM radio -- are used to create and simulate a 'cross over' imagery. In this field of simulacrum, I may refer to certain

recent Bollywood films, such as *Rang de Basanti* and *Lage Raho Munna Bhai,* where a potentially trans-national media-message impacts initially and powerfully national and nationalistic audiences. These media products lead us to think about complex ways in which they are consumed not only by targeted ethnic or religious niche audiences in the diaspora, through Zee TV, for instance, but also by shared circuits of national and transnational viewership (Vertovec 1999).

Nation

Let me sum up some of the methodological and strategic lessons that are a fall out or spin-off from my foregoing discussion of diaspora and trans-nation that would be relevant to an understanding of the briefest but the most vital of my three sections, namely, the nation. The study of the Indian diaspora helps to reveal the nature of specific social institutions in India, for example, the variable relationship between caste and Hinduism (see Jain 2009). It also reveals 'holistically' the nature of the Indian nation-state. The 'horizons' of trans-nation in our times, both its dis-contents and potentialities as discussed above in relation to transmigrants, have a salutary message to impart for our thinking about India as a nation-state, particularly as regards our building up of a welfare state and its cultural diplomacy. Two crucial observations of Amartya Sen's classic (1982) and recent (2009) contributions to politico-economic philosophy and practice are germane to the idea of the nation as stated by me at the outset. Firstly, in contrast to the utopian and transcendent philosophies of thinkers such as Immanuel Kant and Georg Hegel, we pay more attention to the 'pragmatic' thought of Adam Smith, J.S. Mills, and Karl Marx. As I see it, in relation to our stance towards the nation-state, it would disabuse our minds from the extreme rightist or leftist thinking about the withering away of the state. Importantly, our recognition of the welfare state in practical terms would also test and implement Sen's long-standing idea of the citizens' 'entitlement'. After all, you do need a viable and tangible 'state' to respond to the entitlements of the citizenry in a civil society. This stands at odds with Partha Chatterjee's (2001) negativistic conceptualisation of post-colonial 'political society' in India, where the Indian 'population' in the absence and in violation of an orientation towards modernity (defined by Chatterjee in terms of a model of 'pure' civil society), is doomed to be a chaotic democracy in which ties between the state and the citizen are reduced to patron-client ties. The positive stance of Sen, on the other hand, speaks to the welfare nation-state's (normative) capacity to ameliorate injustice and reduce inequities in society. Similar anti-utopian

arguments have been advanced by eminent Indian sociologists and anthropologists (see Béteille 2008; Roy Burman 2008).

To put the matter for the Indian nation-state in perspective, let me return to the overarching contradiction between trans-nation and nation in Western Europe and other territories under the dominance of a neo-liberal state system. As we have seen, the obliteration of boundaries between nation-states is at one level an empirical fact – the trans-state movement of arms, capital, population, and even sovereignty (Ong 1999) – is witness to it. Yet, in response to the assault from the trans-nation, the constraints of the nation-state in terms of law and order and policy remain intact, if not strengthened. Thus, immigration laws, protectionism in trade, and policies of outsourcing, environment and energy utilisation, etc. have become more stringent. So, let us be under no illusion: trans-state (popularly known as trans-nationalist) pressures lead not to the dilution but to the reinforcement of the state. (See, for a somewhat different take on the subject, particularly relating trans-nationalism to civil society, Waldinger and Fitzgerald [2004]).

Let us also note that pluralism and multiculturalism are not unmediated by state power and national self-interest. This is beginning to be a feature of political systems globally. There has long been an intellectual advocacy of what I would call an 'evolutionary deficit' in conceiving the making of the nation-state in the third world. In fact, much of the ideology of nation-building, so-called, in the third world is built on the assumption of 'not yet' (Chakrabarty 2000). This pervasive myth of valorising the nexus between nation-state and civil society in developed countries as the final stage for us to aspire for and reach has to be given a real hard look. For, it is one thing to philosophise the 'deficit' idea in terms of different concepts of historiography as does Dipesh Chakrabarty – to philosophise 'the difference' which is at once cultural and politico-economic no less – but it is quite another matter to follow the track we are pursuing here, namely, to diagnose the discontent with the trans-nation phenomenon and reaction to it in terms of policies and supporting ideologies of governance within 'developed' nation-states themselves. The 'governmentality' of here and now in the long-established nation-states, namely, Australia or USA, with its covert and, perhaps, reluctant support to class and race discrimination of and among transmigrants, gives a lie to the application of the theory of 'evolutionary deficit' to the third world alone. It carries the danger of degenerating into a kind of dogmatic and reactionary rationalisation of theory and practice in social sciences.

Conclusion

What am I doing here in a sociological conference, speaking mostly of
political science, philosophy, history or international relations? Let me
begin with the trite observation that there is now a unity of the social
sciences, more so in an age where the globalisation of infrastructures has
to be accompanied by – if not already there – a globalisation of the mind.
Secondly, the old chestnut of a disjunction between theory and
application in the social sciences (not to speak of a heuristic separation)
has to be discarded. Thirdly, agency, subjectivity, reflexivity, and
proactivity have come to stay in our apprehension of social reality.
Bearing on these matters, there is a pithy observation of my social
anthropological mentors at the Australian National University where I
was a student nearly half-a-century ago: 'Description is analysis in
yesterday's categories and analysis is description in tomorrow's
categories' (Barnes and Epstein 1961: 10). Fourthly, though a point in
sociology as old as the hills, we must look at dynamics and change, both
cohesion and conflict, thus avoiding reifications and essentialisms.
Fifthly, I would like to say a few words on the necessity of
problematisation to move beyond defining phenomena for the sake of
definitions (often purportedly of universal application).

Let me, as illustration, take two eternals of the sociology of India,
namely, tribe and caste. I need not, in front of this learned audience
expostulate on the sociologists' need of doing some history, both
backwards (so-called 'presentist' history) and linear. Setting up of some
kind of 'ideal types' is also a useful methodological device (see Tambiah
2000). But beyond these steps, there is the need to weave in something
normative or ideal in our problematisation. Here, surely, the ideology of
the researcher raises its head and we shall have to confront it frontally by
doing what Gunnar Myrdal (1944) suggested years ago, namely, making
our implicit assumptions and biases open and explicit. To give one
famous example, when Louis Dumont (1970) spoke of hierarchy and
holism in Indian society and contrasted it with individualism in the West,
he did not *openly* advocate his value preference for the former over the
latter. In the event, while perceptive and sharp about possessive
individualism in the West (see Verdery 1993), his reading and
characterisation of the Indian hierarchy, for example, the hand-in-glove
relationship between *jati* and the pure/impure in Hinduism, the absence
of the individual in India except for the renouncer, the complete
undermining of power and economic relationships in the Indian social
structure (not even delineating the different cultural moulds into which
these were cast), etc. remained sorely deficient because they were based

on dominating *unstated* assumptions and value preferences. The second manoeuvre that I recommend for taking ideology on board along with our methodology is a thorough contextualisation of the problem at hand. This too is nothing new but merits iteration because the parameters of this preliminary step have changed – our contextualisation today demands 'glocalisation' to use a somewhat inelegant but useful term.

That this 'local' in our contextualized problematic would have the 'nation-state' as the important limiting case needs to be demonstrated. In his Report titled *Human Ecology and Statutory Status of Ethnic Entities in Sikkim,* B.K. Roy Burman states, 'I have long held the view that social science pursuit without commitment to social action is like carrying a dead body without life in it' (2008: viii). Also, at a more philosophical level, I would like to quote his holistic ideology: 'Two severe malaises haunt modern humans. The first is ecological crisis.... The second crisis ... is self-quarantined egoism parading as freely chosen individualism' (*ibid.*: ix). Based on this vision, Roy Burman, in a perceptive methodo-logical framework for his task, points out the vulnerability of all communities (which he designates as scheduled tribes), their communitarian character (and hence the need for the investigator to be sensitive to their collective self-perceptions). Functionally, he emphasises the need to carefully examine the communities' relations, both ecological and socio-economic, among themselves and to the outside world. It is not my purpose here to further expand on the epistemological basis of the task that Roy Burman set for himself, one that was carried out at the request of the Government of Sikkim (and which epistemology, T.B. Subba tells me, the state sponsors found somewhat incomprehensible; I am not surprised). Nor is it relevant to note the substantive criticisms made of the findings of the Report, namely, the conventional ethnographic summaries of various commu-nities without heeding the theoretically sophisticated emphasis Roy Burman had placed on their environmental adaptation and change, and the absence of a full and meaningful application by his anthropological collaborators of the practically useful contrast that he made between a diagnostic definition and functional implications and instrumentalities that were needed to counter the communities' vulnerability. But one criticism that I would vehemently oppose is that the Report was written under state *patronage.* Roy Burman gives a straightforward, blow-by-blow account of the circumstances under which and conditions on which he undertook the task, including his intransigence on points where his autonomy and integrity as a scientist was sought to be compromised by the state authorities. What stands out is this anthropologist's total commitment to a mission that was state sponsored all the same.

This brings me back to the issue of problematisation that I raised at the beginning of this sub-section and to the anthropological and sociological focus on tribe and caste. If, as I have said, both philosophically and pragmatically, neither the nation-state nor bureaucracy (*à la* Max Weber) is to be wished away and an openly stated ideological stand combined with a critical and vigilant rapprochement with the welfare nation-state is factored into our research undertakings, then I can clearly see two pivotal areas where sociologists and social anthropologists can make an invaluable contribution to what Professor Srinivas called 'nation-building', and this in their very own stomping ground. I refer, firstly, to the tribal insurgency in the North-East and the entire tribal belt of middle India infested by the 'menace' of naxalism. Secondly, a serious and committed probe could be made into the problems and amelioration of the socially backward sections of our population, into what has hitherto been regarded narrowly as a *jati* or casteist phenomenon, a dalit phenomenon or, at best, a subaltern stirring. As it appears now, both these issues are related to nation-state hegemony, of which I shall say more a little later. The phenomena need sociological investigation: the study of situationally defined minority politics as 'the art of the possible' (see Jain 1996) under the debilitating conditions for the vulnerable minorities of what Antonio Gramsci conceptualised as 'transformist hegemony' (Williams 1989) in a wayward welfare state. This would be the diagnostic part (to use the Roy Burman approach) of which the functional counterpart would be to devise mechanisms (actually also to use more efficiently and holistically the ones already in place) to build a firm democratic welfare state energised by a progressively enlightened, responsive, and not too iniquitous civil society. In this we have no need to either jettison or *imitate* from elsewhere, the practice of democracy in India. We may examine contextually and with a view to its feasibility what one of the prominent leaders of the disempowered communities of our nation state has called the political act of 'social engineering'. And yet, as George Orwell wrote more than half-a-century ago, 'The worst thing one can do with words is to surrender to them' (1953). If language is to be 'an instrument of expressing and not for concealing thought', he continued, one must 'let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way about' (*ibid.*). This, then, is the task before us as social scientists.

Epilogue: On Nationalism

With my resurrection of the concept and practicality of the nation as the sociologists' limiting framework in a globalised world, it may be

assumed that I take a *nationalist* position. But that would be a mistake. In most known empirical instances, hegemonic nationalism perverts the functions of each of the 'nation-state' copula: on the one hand, it pushes the law and order machinery of the *state* in a repressive direction, thus, impeding its welfare functions. On the other hand, the homogenising cultural telos of the *nation* thwarts the enriching diversities of its constituent nationalities. Both these constraints stifle the nation-state's organic linkages with the civil society. The regress of extreme nationalism into fascism in recent European history continues to ring loudly in our ears. It would take me far outside the present brief were I to spell out in detail the distinction I would make as a sociologist and social anthropologist between *patriotism* and nationalism. Suffice it to say that, for me, the exemplar of patriotism (*contra* nationalism) is Rabindranath Tagore whose rootedness in Bengali culture and vernacular was perfectly compatible, indeed significantly contributive, to his bilingualism and intellectual multilingualism in a trans-national arena. To my mind the poet and visionary Tagore could never be fitted into a model of modernity filiated to the imprint of British colonialism alone, namely, the 'pure' civil society of Partha Chatterjee's conception. That precisely is the reason why the 'nationalism' of his historical conjuncture was an anathema to Tagore (see Nandy 1994).

As social scientists, a more powerful reason for not regressing into national*ism* is what I mentioned earlier, to avoid the pitfalls of a closed mind-set; indeed to seek globalisation of the mind. In this process, I would like to underscore that, in my section on the 'trans-nation', I have discussed certain discontents with the phenomenon and its inevitability and redeeming features. If, as patriotic Indians, we wish to learn from the experiences of others, especially the experience that diaspora has highlighted about the nature of nation-state and trans-state in juxtaposition and contradiction to each other, then we stand to gain from the study of both the strength and weaknesses of this conjuncture.

Finally, nationalism in most of its accepted senses, masquerading as the mainstream, is a propeller or motor of what I have referred to earlier as Gramsci's notion of 'transformist hegemony' in the nation-state. It debilitates and vitiates the goals of the welfare state, particularly in regard to the minorities and 'substantialised ethnicities' that tribal and caste entities are in reality. As fractionalised minorities, these entities experience a double-bind, both identitarian and pragmatic. On the one hand, the burgeoning nationalism of the hegemonic modern state controlled by the dominant majority demands from them a contribution to the imaginary common patrimony of a single, unified, and homogeneous nation. On the other hand, their heterogeneous and ethnically

conceived 'root' identities and identifications repulse them from hanging on to the coat-tails of an alien entity called the nation. This dilemma of the minorities in the nation-state too is a lesson we learn forcefully from the predicament of Indian transmigrant minorities settled in multicultural nation-states globally.

I also wish to sound a note of what should be seen as a disclaimer. The subject I have chosen is vast and within the scope of one lecture I could have hardly hoped to do it justice. My intention here has been to look at the forest rather than particular trees from the viewpoint of sociology and social anthropology. Were I to integrate more fully in my discourse the perspectives of international relations and political science, for example, I should have dealt with international organisations (both governmental and non-governmental), border issues, and what is sometimes called a trans-national civil society, especially by the human rights activists, in greater detail. That will have to await a more extended treatment.

Apropos the discourse on diaspora, trans-nation, and nation I cannot, in the end, resist the temptation of striking a personal note that is relevant to a lecture in memory of Professor Srinivas. As a lecturer, for many years of my career, of Indian Sociology (later designated 'University Lecturer in the Social Anthropology of South Asia') at Oxford, I belonged to an academic lineage of which Professor Srinivas was the distinguished apical ancestor. Unlike Professor Srinivas, however, I was not a student at Oxford. When Srinivas had completed his DPhil at Oxford, and wanted to return to India to teach, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown is reported to have told him that he was not yet ready to teach in India and needed apprenticeship of another year of teaching at Oxford (Srinivas 1997). Times have changed indeed, as the doyen of the study of social change in modern India, if he was alive today, would have been the first to appreciate. As I have noted elsewhere (Jain 2007b: 177), fortunately, we do not *now* have to either hear or heed such colonial nonsense!

Notes

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1. For purposes of discussion, throughout this presentation, I use the terms 'nation', 'state', and even 'civil society', either separately or in combination, interchangeably according to the context. My inclusive or holistic conception of India is that of a democratic 'welfare' nation-state encompassing civil society. Conversely, India is also the ideal-typical referent for the concepts and entities designated as nation and nation-state.

2. For more detailed and graphic models of the relationship between diaspora and space, see Voigt-Graf (2004) and Dufoix (2008: 59-69).
3. For some examples, see Leclerc (forthcoming).
4. For a recent analysis of Indian the IT workers' horizontal or intra-class networks, see, Upadhya (2004).
5. See, for example, analyses along these lines of recent violence against Indian students in Australia (Baas 2009) and their capitulation to racial and class hegemonies of USA by second-generation Indian transmigrants (Shah 2009).
6. For a somewhat essentialist analytical valorisation of traditional Indian social institutions in diaspora to the neglect of historical and contextual changes, both in the societies of origin and settlement, see Dufoix (2008: 45).
7. Whether in China itself they are largely conflict-free or not is an open question, and if the former, is it because the nationalities are kept under the thumb of the peculiar autocratic-democratic regime and/or show-cased as such to the non-China world?

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The Social Science Imagination in India:
Deconstructing Boundaries and Redefining Limits

Krithika Srinivasan

The social sciences have played a significant role in challenging and politicising various forms of exploitation. However, Indian social science discourse has largely ignored the exploitation that is inherent in most human–non-human relationships and, at times, even actively delegitimised any efforts to question the same. This paper tries to understand why the ethical aspects of human–non-human (specifically, animal) interactions have remained outside social science analysis. It does so by examining the arguments used to support such exclusion and by exploring a range of taken-for-granted differences between human and non-human animals. The analysis suggests that the reluctance of the Indian social sciences to engage with this question is unjustified. In doing so, it points to the need for social sciences to continually question the exclusionary power of their boundaries by deploying an empathetic and self-reflexive imagination.

From the Sociological Imagination to the Social Science Imagination

C. Wright Mills, in his classic 1959 text, makes a case for the 'sociological imagination': a quality of mind that is necessary to understand society and social and personal phenomena. To Mills, the sociological imagination is a prerequisite for anyone seeking to make sense of life and the world, as it provides the ability to understand the interrelations between society and the individual, history and biography, and helps to 'make clear the elements of contemporary uneasiness and indifference' (1959: 13); to Mills, the sociological imagination is the

'capacity to shift from one perspective to another' and will be the 'major common intellectual denominator' of the era (*ibid.*: 7, 14). Mills also contends that the sociological imagination has a critical role to play in the 'intellectual and political tasks of social analysis' (*ibid.*: 21) and in moving beyond the 'pretentious mediocrity' (*ibid.*: 20) that is seen in the social sciences.

Exploitation, violence, and injustice have long been a focus of social science inquiry, and the field has engaged with these themes in both descriptive and interventional/political manners (Latour 2005). As Satish Saberwal puts it, 'the social sciences, including sociology, are double faced: on one side, these look for ways to understand "what things are like"; on the other, this understanding, it is hoped, would enable us to influence "what things ought to be like"' (2004: 419). While to Saberwal and B. Latour, this dual role can pose difficulties, the involvement of the social sciences in challenging exploitation and hierarchies that legitimise marginalisation – to put it simply, in subaltern politics – has been and continues to be crucial (Baviskar 2008).

However, the social sciences themselves have played active and passive roles in perpetuating exploitation (Denzin and Lincoln 2005), and the social science imagination has often been slow to expand its 'frontiers of justice', a term I borrow from Martha C. Nussbaum (2006). The social sciences started as studies of western societies, and gradually (reluctantly and otherwise) evolved to include that which was not previously considered as belonging to its domain – the concerns of women, transgender, and gay people, for instance.

In India, the modern social sciences were born during the colonial period, and served mostly to develop 'cultural technologies to rule' (Yadav 2006: 3847). After independence, the task of nation building helped set agendas for the field, and it was only much later that issues related to children, dalits, women, etc. entered its boundaries (Rao 1982; Chaudhuri 2003; Rege 2003). Surveys of research in sociology and social anthropology undertaken by the Indian Council for Social Science Research point to the expanding boundaries of the Indian social sciences; while the first two surveys (up to 1969 and 1969–1979) barely mention women or gender as groups/themes of social science study, the third survey (1980-87) has an entire chapter devoted to 'women's studies and women's development' (ICSSR 1972/1974, 1985, 2000). Sharmila Rege (2003) also describes a similar evolutionary process in Indian sociology with respect to women, and demonstrates how it was only in the 1980s that women's studies became important. A survey of the *Economic and Political Weekly* shows the same trend – while the 13-year period from 1966 to 1979 has only twenty-one papers on the subject of women, the

next five years (1980-85) see a proliferation (forty papers) of discussions
on this subject (Ghosal 1997).

    This paper suggests that there is a continued need for the Indian
social sciences to question and push their boundaries. It does so by
exploring an example of an exploitative relationship that continues to
elude the imagination of modern social science in India despite its all-
pervasive presence – the human–non-human relationship.

The Non-Human, 'Social Facts', and the Social Sciences

While one plausible explanation for this absence could be that the social
sciences are concerned with *only* human beings, and *not* the non-human,
two factors compel us to rethink this reasoning. First, the history of the
social sciences shows us that the intellectual community has over time
played a key role in maintaining exploitation by deeming specific groups
as being outside the purview of academic debate – by excluding them
from 'knowledge' or the discipline. As N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln
note in their discussion on disciplinary imaginaries, 'the social sciences
are normative disciplines, always already embedded in issues of value,
ideology, power, desire, sexism, racism, domination, repression and
control' (2005: 13). Feminist literature points to the epistemological
exclusion of women, and Michel Foucault (1998) has elaborated on the
power-knowledge nexus. Second, it is important to recall Mills' assertion
that all social analysts who are 'imaginatively aware of the promise of
their work have consistently asked ... [w]hat is the structure of this
particular society as a whole? What are its essential components, and
how are they related to one another?' (1959: 6).

    It is an indisputable fact that society as a whole and human beings as
individuals are constantly interacting with non-human life. Therefore, *no*
attempt to understand human nature or social phenomena is going to be
complete when these 'essential components' of human life are not
engaged with seriously.[1] This has been discussed before: for instance,
Ramachandra Guha (1994) and M. Smith (2001) show that while the
social sciences for long followed Emile Durkheim's maxim that 'social
facts' can be explained only by other 'social facts', the emergence of
environmental concerns led to the recognition that there is a need to take
into account the environment in which we live, of which we are a part.
As Mills says, meaningful social science is contingent on the ability 'to
range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most
intimate features of the human self – and to see the relations between the
two' (1959: 7). The social sciences, in order to fulfil their potential,
should, therefore, at the very least, be critically analysing the ways in

which human beings relate to non-human Others, and uncovering the implications of these relationships for both 'human nature' and the 'non-human Other'.

It is in such a context that I survey the manners in which non-human beings, specifically non-human animals,[2] have been ignored and, at times, even delegitimised, as a subject of social science scholarship in India, and deconstruct the assumptions and views that have possibly prevented the human–non-human life relationship from gaining legitimacy as a subject of academic contemplation. The paper points to the contradictions in and the lack of foundation for such views, and reminds that dominant social science discursive formations have often been implicated in processes of exploitation that are linked to such epistemological exclusion. While the particular case discussed in the paper is, for reasons of analytical simplicity, that of non-human animals, the core argument of the paper relates to social science boundaries and their exclusionary effects in general. The main objective of the paper is to question the seeming appropriateness and normality of accepted boundaries; therefore, despite the term 'redefining' in the title, it does not suggest new imaginative limits, as doing so would be antithetical to its purpose. Rather, it calls for a renewed Indian social science imagination that is engaged in a *continual* process of self-examination and redefinition, for only such a non-complacent and critical approach can be the foundation of a truly inclusive, dynamic, and progressive academic field.

The Non-Human Animal and Indian Social Science

Across the world, the human–non-human relationship is largely exploitative, and the situation is no different in India. As G. Elder *et al.* observe, while the legitimacy and acceptability of different types of human-animal relationships vary across cultures, what is remarkable is the 'universality of human violence toward animals' (1998: 87). Indian social science, however, has more or less excluded the non-human animal as a *subject of concern* (as different from an *object of study*) by both (i) ignoring and (ii) actively delegitimising its interests. That is, while the human–non-human relationship is considered in terms of its impacts on *human* interests, the impacts of the same relationship on the *non-human* is not included in mainstream social science inquiry.

Absence

The ignoring of the non-human animal is evidenced by its *absence* in social science literature. For example, surveys of the *Sociological*

Bulletin (1952–2008[3]) and the *Indian Social Science Review* (1999–2005[4]) reveal a total lack of articles that engage with the non-human as a focus of concern. A search of the *Economic and Political Weekly*'s web archives (from 1999 onwards; keywords: 'animal', 'environment', 'non-human', and 'animal rights') did offer a few exceptions (Samanta 2006; Srinivasan and Nagaraj 2007; Kothari 2009), but the overall evidence points to a highly anthropocentric scholarship. For example, the only article that answered to the term 'animal rights', begins on a balanced note calling for NGO and state programmes for the livelihood rehabilitation of communities that use performing animals such as dancing bears, but ends up concluding that the sight of children performing in bear costumes is 'a poignant reminder of *where* the priorities of an animal rights campaign should lie' (Radhakrishna 2007: 4225; emphasis added). To give another instance, an editorial piece (EPW 2000: 1417) on zoos examines the proposed closure of the Nagpur zoo from a predominantly instrumental angle – it calls for the development of Indian zoos as the '[c]reative expansion of zoos provides an opportunity for creative education in ecology as well as a base for Indian science to contribute to the expanding knowledge base in zoology and conservation of forest and animal wealth', completely bypassing the debates on the ethics of the same (Anderson 1998; Acampora 2005).

While there does exist some work on the ethics of human–non-human relationships, this has often been a part of religious texts (for example, the Buddhist and Jaina texts), thus making it a matter for consumption by only the religiously inclined, especially in the context of a secular democracy. There is also an overlooking of secular scholarship that engages politically with the non-human animal: for example, Mohandas K. Gandhi's vegetarianism and his condemnation of the use of animals in medical research in *Hind Swaraj* (1939: 59), Shiv Visvanathan's discussion of theosophy's critique of the use of animals in science (1997), and work in philosophy (such as Srivastava 2005) are rarely, if ever, discussed in mainstream social science research and education.

This is not to say that human–non-human relationships are not studied by Indian social science. Indian environmental social science has devoted much attention to this, but this has remained largely anthropocentric in concern, with the non-human treated largely as an object to be managed and distributed (for example, Shiva and Bandhopadhyay 1991; Krishna 1996, 2004). Literature on environmental ethics and politics has been mainly centred on the 'question of social justice, of allowing the poor to have as much claim in the fruits of nature as the powerful' (Guha 2000: vi), or how environmental protection (or the lack

of it) affects human societies, and how we must 'treat' non-human life so as to ensure our own survival and wellbeing (for example, Shahabuddin *et al.* 2007). Indra Munshi's review article on the 'environmental concerns of social scientists in India' (2000: 251) also indicates an overtly human-focused agenda, and she opines that an underexplored dimension is the human-nature relationship. There does exist literature on conservation (Singh 2003; Thapar 2003; Gadgil 2005; Guha 2007; Shahabuddin and Rangarajan 2007) that focuses on the concerns of the non-human, but this is restricted to charismatic and/or ecologically valuable, keystone species and biodiversity in general. In such literature, the emphasis is on the ecological and aesthetic benefits of conservation, and domestic or non-exotic animals are not accorded any importance. Even these positions, however, have remained marginal and are often delegitimised, as I shall show below.

Illegitimacy

While, at one level, the non-human animal is absent from social science discussion because of neglect and a heavy emphasis on solely human concerns, at another level, any academic or activist move to attend to the non-human animal has invited delegitimisation by mainstream academia in various forms.

The post-colonial era in India saw 'fierce debates relating to the need for an indigenous approach vis-à-vis the importation and imitation of western paradigms' of social science knowledge (Mukherji 2006: 175). While this trend has positively reshaped the contours of the social sciences, it has also been rather perversely used to stop any debate on the ethics of human–non-human animal relationships in India. Standard Indian social science literature, while discussing protection of non-human nature, has often argued that these ideas are part of imposed western hegemony and neo-colonialism (for example, Agarwal 1994). Take the case of wildlife conservation,[5] for instance. The practice of identifying protected areas for non-human animals is typically criticised (Baviskar 1997) as being a western and elite plot to deprive the Third World populace of their 'natural resources'. In yet another instance of such a standpoint, Guha and J. Martinez-Alier say that 'the initial impetus for setting up parks ... came from ... ex-hunters turned conservationists belonging mostly to the declining Indian feudal elite, and .... international agencies ... seeking to transplant the American system of national parks on to Indian soil', and that deep ecology's emphasis on wilderness preservation 'provides an impetus to the imperialist yearnings of Western biologists' (1997: 95-96).

Despite this distaste for the 'western' concern for the non-human animal, in sharp contrast, there is not much hesitation on the part of the Indian academia (or activist sector, for that matter) when it comes to importing concepts such as human rights, affirmative action, women's rights, human development, etc. And, while the social sciences have repeatedly questioned the use of *western* concepts and frameworks to understand *indigenous* cultures, there is a readiness, as we shall see in the following section, to accept the use of *human* standards such as rationality to understand and value *non-human* animals (Wolch 1998). This is akin to saying that a human is of less value because he/she cannot find/see in the dark or does not have a sense of smell that is as keen as a dog's.

The charge of elitism has constantly dogged any discourse that is protective of the non-human animal. For example, wildlife conservation is often seen as embodying the vested interests of urban elites (Vasan 2005). To Amita Baviskar, 'the Silent Valley power project promoted by the Government of Kerala – which was given up by the Centre because it threatened tropical rainforests – was an instance of the success of elitist environmentalism' (1997: 196-7), and to Guha and Martinez-Alier 'Southern lovers of the wilderness come typically from patrician backgrounds' (1997:19). This arises from the idea that only economically well-off people are concerned about non-human animals; while it is certainly true that people from the upper economic classes are the most visible in animal protection work and politics, what is not true is the inference that other sections of society are not sympathetic to non-human animals, even and especially non-charismatic ones such as street dogs. Anyone working in the field of animal welfare will agree that the poor are, in general, more generous in sharing their limited space and food with animals than well-off people.

Now it *is* true to an extent that only someone whose basic needs are already taken care of is likely to get involved in politics for another living being. But this fact is not peculiar to the non-human animal cause; if there are disadvantaged people found at the forefront of struggles around human marginalisation, it is because they have a personal stake in the discourse – the communities living in the Narmada Valley marched to Delhi and protested the Sardar Sarovar project only when they realised that they were losing their homes and livelihoods. And usually it is only the 'elite' who can afford to participate in such politics even though they do not have a personal stake.[6] Baviskar (1997) points out that many grassroots social movements are based on the coming together of urban middle-class activists and the local affected populations. Medha Patkar and Aruna Roy are two examples. In the case of non-human animals,

those who have a personal stake – the non-human animals – cannot communicate in human language and are, therefore, not in a position to participate, just like infants and the cognitively challenged. This has the consequence that any political action carried out in their name has an 'elitist' face.

There are other contradictions. While we condemn 'inviolate' spaces for wildlife (Shahabuddin *et al.* 2007), we support 'inviolate' spaces such as cities for human beings where tigers, monkeys, 'stray' dogs, and rats are not welcome, and are, in fact, killed, trapped, or chased out without question. Similarly, there is a strong trend in Indian social science discourse to actively (and rightly) support the rights of tribal groups over their ancestral lands (Gadgil and Guha 1992; Bhatia 2005). This position is based on the fact that these groups have historically lived on these lands and, therefore, as the original inhabitants, have far more claim over these regions than the state or colonial 'masters', and that they have been the victims of 'historical injustice' (Forest Rights Bill 2005, cf. Bhatia 2005: 4891). But this position changes when it comes to non-human animals. Surely, non-human animals and plants have even more ancestral claim to the land than any human community? Why not consider them the victims of 'historical injustice' as well, and as having more claim over our cities and forests than their colonising masters – humans, in this case?

In India, an anti–non-human stance seems to be more or less built into the psyche of the progressive social scientist. One common argument is that India, being a country with a large and poor human population, cannot afford to expend time and resources on concerns of the non-human, as Baviskar (1997) describes in her survey of Indian environmental social science. This implies that concern and politics for one issue/group requires the dismissal of other issues/groups as illegitimate and unimportant. By the same logic, scholars/activists concerned with women's issues should dismiss caste-related discrimination as irrelevant, and those working on caste exploitation should consider action against child abuse a waste of time.

An anti-non-human stance also stems from the mistaken conflation of meat politics with caste-class politics. The animal becomes a pawn in sectarian politics, and any pro-animal discourse is immediately decried on the grounds that it implies an elitist, casteist, and non-secular vegetarianism. Meat eating is widely seen as a progressive act in India because vegetarianism is associated with Hindu upper-caste eating practices. As Kancha Ilaiah puts it, 'Vegetarian' is a synonym for 'Brahmin' (1996: 68).

There is an element of truth to this because Hindutva political lobbies and their demand for bans on cow slaughter have come to be associated with vegetarianism (Ahmad 2005). This association of non-human animal politics with Hindutva ideology and politics has arguably been exacerbated by the affiliation of India's only animal activist-politician, Maneka Gandhi, with the Bharatiya Janata Party. This, and the charge of elitism discussed earlier, have the consequence that non-human animal politics is often seen as violating the culture and dietary habits, and destroying the livelihoods of, marginalised communities (Ahmad 2005; Radhakrishna 2007). For example, J. Jayalalitha's (the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu) 2003 ban on animal sacrifice in temples by invocation of the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act was interpreted and opposed by 'secularists ... as a step towards homogenising existing Hinduisms in the image of Brahminism', leading to the repeal of the ban (Pandian 2005: 2313).

However, to conclude from such unfortunate connections that all animal ethics and politics is linked to caste-class hegemony is factually incorrect. And to ignore the obvious violence and suffering involved in the ways we use non-human animals and to legitimise their exploitation in the name of countering discrimination is a careless response in the Indian academia. For example, I. Ahmad asserts that, in a pluralistic society, meat-based food habits ought not to be challenged because pluralism is the 'coexistence with more or less tension in the same social space of many systems of global convictions and of the communities who produce them' (2005: 4979). But do we defend the caste system, *devadasi* dedication, human sacrifice, *purdah* (forced seclusion of women), or genital mutilation while upholding cultural rights, traditional livelihoods, or pluralism? Even polygamy is increasingly being seen as unacceptable (Engineer 2004).

Furthermore, a truly ethical standpoint can *never* be based on meaningless bans on cow slaughter,[7] but would rather imply a vegan lifestyle, one that avoids milk, deerskin, and ghee – which are the cornerstones of Brahmanical rituals and eating habits – and one that shuns violence of any kind, including towards humans. In addition, it must be emphasised that it is not marginal communities who are the most implicated in animal exploitation and abuse; rather, the higher an individual on the economic ladder, the greater her/his harmful impacts on non-human animals, say, for example, due to increased access to medical technologies, leather shoes, silk clothes, or simply higher levels of consumption. Therefore, discourses that are truly pro-animal can never be anti-poor or anti-minority in a communitarian sense. It is the actions and relationships that are critiqued, and not the communities.

One other common dismissal tactic is to relegate human-animal relationships to the domains of emotions and morality. This is made evident by recourse to the derogatory appellation 'animal lover' (Balasubrahmanyan 1991: 2860) or 'wilderness lover' (Guha and Martinez-Alier 1997: 19). Love is an emotion, and U. Narayan points out that 'emotions have always been regarded as totally opposed to reason and as always impediments to knowledge' (1988: 32). Similarly, moral arguments in favour of the non-human animal are not regarded as being acceptable because morality is seen as not conducive to cultural pluralism (Kumar 2006). We forget that social justice is an equally morality-laden concept when we delegitimise animal ethics as non-progressive morality. Another position is that the human–non-human animal relationship is a matter for the *personal* domain – it is not a *political* issue – as is evidenced by arguments for cultural relativism in the context of human-animal relationships. In saying this, we forget the hard won success of feminist theory and politics in establishing that the *personal is political*. Of course, it still may be argued that only human beings 'make' the political, as only they can participate in it, but such an argument would imply that non-participants like children or the mentally challenged would have to be excluded from the 'political' domain along with non-human animals.

The Exclusionary Politics of Social Science Knowledge

Before going on to the politics of knowledge, let us look at one simple example of how the Indian social sciences are limiting themselves because of the exclusion of the non-human as a subject of concern. Hydroelectric and other mega development projects have been the subject of much debate and critique in the Indian social sciences (Parasuraman and Cernea 1999; Khagram 2004). While much attention is given to the impacts on the local communities that are displaced, impacts on non-human animals is limited to an analysis of 'environmental' costs and long-term environmental damage. What is ignored is that while the human inhabitants of the area, on paper at least, are entitled to resettlement, the non-human animals have no choice but to drown in the rising waters. The few that manage to flee are killed when they enter human settlements because they are seen encroaching 'inviolate' human settlements and posing a threat to human well-being. Despite this, there is absolutely no discussion at all of resettling and rehabilitating the non-human victims of development projects. At the most, compensatory measures such as afforestation are recommended, but of what use are these to the individuals that suffer and die as a result of the project? So,

here, we have an instance of how inquiry into an issue is incomplete because the non-human animal is not taken into consideration.

While addressing issues related to exploitation, the social sciences have discussed the manner in which dominant knowledge bodies maintain power structures and contribute to the devalorisation of subaltern groups. Foucault has 'demonstrated how power is woven into all aspects of social and personal life, pervading [even the] social sciences' (Kattakayam 2006). To Foucault, 'all forms of "knowledge" and "truth" are merely the triumphant version of events that has succeeded in emerging from the perpetual struggle of ideas and ideologies that characterise our way of interacting' (Downing 2008: 13).

Feminist theory (Ferguson 1994; Alcoff 2000) has also shown that women have been systematically marginalised by the intellectual community through a subtle process of deeming them unworthy of academic concern, by devaluing their cognitive patterns and modes of knowledge, and by keeping them away from the focus of theory in general – the process of epistemological exclusion, which to Arjun Appadurai (2000), is linked to social exclusion. It is typically dominant social groups that are involved in the development of mainstream knowledges that are portrayed as objective and universal, and the academic marginalisation of a particular group can usually be traced to the vested interests of the 'knower' (who seeks to protect his/her own interests). For example, the colonial project was justified and driven by dominant knowledge bodies like colonial anthropology and Orientalism.

The situation is similar with respect to human–non-human animal relations. The discursive formation of the social sciences is constructed by the dominant group (human beings, the 'knowers') and consequently excludes (deliberately or by omission) non-human animals (the potential 'knowns') from the focus of inquiry. This exclusion is achieved by means of a variety of arguments, some of which have been reviewed above. All these arguments, however, seem to be based on an *a priori* underlying assumption that non-human animals *do not matter as much* as humans, that their lives and well-being are not *as* important, except in an instrumental sense as conveyed by the idea of sustainable development (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987). This is evident in M. Radhakrishna's examination of performing bear rescue, where she suggests that even while the efforts to protect animals are appreciated, the negative impacts these have on the human users of these animals mean that 'public debate is necessary to discuss the lengths to which animal rights campaigns *can and should go*' (2007: 4224; emphasis added).

Only the abovementioned assumption permits the otherwise inconsistent arguments that dismiss concern for non-human animals as western, elitist, casteist, non-secular, emotional, moralistic, and irrelevant in general. This assumption is so deeply entrenched in our collective consciousness that there is practically no discussion at all in the Indian social sciences of its origins or validity. What are the beliefs about non-human animals that give rise to this assumption? How valid are they, both in terms of facticity and as criteria for ethical and political decision-making? How can we understand these beliefs in the light of the general nature of the human- non-human animal relationship and what we have learnt from historical precedents?

Difference, Exploitation, and Exclusion

It is possible that the social sciences have ignored the concerns of non-human animals because they are widely perceived as being different from and, therefore, inferior to human beings and, in turn, not worthy of ethical consideration. As the animal ethics literature points out, humans and non-human animals are commonly seen as differing on the following axes: sentiency; language; consciousness/self-awareness, intentionality and rationality; and moral agency (Armstrong and Botzler 2003; Garner 2004; Francione 2008).

Human-Animal Difference Revisited

The simplest definition of sentiency is the ability to feel physical sensations such as pain and/or emotions such as fear (DeGrazia 2003). René Descartes held that animals are not sentient and are mere automatons, like machines (Rollin 2003a). There is now, however, evidence to suggest that non-human animals experience pain[8] and suffering like humans (Armstrong and Botzler 2003; Garner 2004). Nevertheless, there are views that only 'higher' animals suffer (Bermond 2003) or that there are differences in levels of sentiency and the less sentient the non-human, the fewer are our ethical obligations to them, because they are believed not to suffer 'as much' (Silverman 2008). This is used to justify the use of animals in scientific experiments (and also for other purposes such as food, clothing, accessories, and labour).

Pain in animals is studied by identifying physiological and behavioural responses/correlates to painful stimuli that are similar to those found in humans. For example, endorphins, serotonin, enkephalins, and endogenous opiates are secreted in both humans and animals in response to painful stimuli, and similar anaesthetics and analgesics are

effective for pain control in both (Rollin 2003a). The behavioural
responses to pain are remarkably similar (for example, human and rat
responses to electric shocks are alike) as are the morphological structures
involved in pain mechanisms, especially in vertebrates and cephalopods
(Varner 2003). Pain also has the same evolutionary function in humans
and animals, and that is to avoid harm and death.

The arguments of those who deny animal suffering are based on the
fact that, in humans, pain correlates are sometimes seen even in the
absence of the experience of pain, like in the case of spinal cord damage
or alexithymia (an emotional disorder) (Bermond 2003). It is also argued
that similar neuroanatomical structures do not necessarily mean similar
functions, as these *could* have altered during evolution (*ibid.*). The basic
position of such arguments is that even though there are similarities in
pain mechanisms, there is a possibility that these do *not* reflect similar
emotional experiences. As B. Bermond opines, a rat walking over a hot
plate (an electric stove) to get to food does not *necessarily* mean that it
has experienced intense hunger; to him, such a conclusion is only an
'anthropomorphic projection' (*ibid.*: 84). Such arguments are based on
exceptions/abnormalities in human experiences (not the rule), and do not
by any means establish that non-human animals *do not* experience pain.
As Bermond himself notes, pain can be studied directly only in humans,
because only they can be asked whether they have feelings, and
agnosticism about animal pain, as I shall argue below, is made possible
because humans and animals cannot communicate adequately.

The measurement of pain and suffering has always been a difficult
task as it is accepted that pain is subjective (Jennings *et al.* 2009). While
there are several physiological and observational measures of pain, self-
reports are 'considered the gold standard of pain measurement' (Strong
et al. 2002: 126). This brings us to the question of how, given that we do
not share a language with animals and, therefore, cannot elicit self-
reports from them, it is possible to conclude that they suffer *less* or *do
not* suffer, particularly when there is physiological and observational
evidence that they *do* experience pain. By the same logic, we should be
agnostic about pain experience in other humans (including infants) with
whom we do not share a language. If we do believe that humans who do
not share a language with us feel pain, it is because we project our own
mental experiences onto them (Rollin 2003b). What grounds do we have
to dismiss the same projection when it comes to non-human animals
then?

Moving on to language, there is a lot of disagreement about how it
distinguishes humans from non-human animals (Sorabji 1993; Singer
and Kuhse 2002). There is one view that only humans have language,

whereas other views that see language as a system of signs hold that language is common to all animals, while syntax is what is peculiar to human beings (Sorabji 1993). Here again, a fundamental problem is the simple fact that humans do not share a mode of communication with other animal species that is adequate for the sharing of grammatical profundities. Therefore, the conclusion that they don't have language is very shaky indeed; all that can be said with certainty is that they don't have language or syntax as *humans* know it.

What about questions of consciousness, rationality, and intentionality? (Sorabji 1993; Singer and Kuhse 2002; Garner 2004). Consciousness is understood as the ability to be self-aware, form abstract concepts, plan ahead, and deal effectively with new situations, and there is a great deal of variation in views about consciousness in non-human animals (Dawkins 2003). With respect to rationality, the predominant view is that non-human animals do not possess reason and most 'rational' behaviours of non-human animals are dismissed on the grounds that they are mere physical adaptations, while the same/similar behaviour in humans is an 'act of reason' (Sorabji 1993). For example, a mother rat shifting her young ones to a safer location when the nest is disturbed is explained as merely biological and instinctual. It is held that only humans actually possess these qualities in a manner that is *more than biological* and, therefore, *superior* or of more *value*. But, despite the use of various measures to assess such mental qualities (Dawkins 2003; Griffin 2003), conclusions are ultimately based on the inability of non-human animals to *prove or report* to us that they do have these qualities (just like *we* cannot prove or report to *them* that *we* have these qualities). We know that most humans possess consciousness and rationality as we are able to share these ideas with each other. But, given that humans and non-human animals cannot share such concepts, it is unreasonable to conclude that they do not possess such traits.

Another related argument is that, since humans think about and anticipate pain, the future and death, their lives are of more value (Singer 2001). But this takes us back to the question, how can we be certain that non-human animals do not think? And even if they cannot, would the argument (Singer and Kuhse 2002) hold that since babies and mentally challenged people do not possess the capacity to anticipate, to use language, and to reason like other human beings, we are justified in using them as a 'resource'?

It is held that non-human animals are not moral agents and, therefore, are not worthy of moral consideration (Francione 2008). This argument not only ignores much evidence to the contrary (Bekoff 2007), but also forgets that it is widely accepted that we have moral obligations

to human beings who are not moral agents – for example, cognitively challenged people or infants. It also overlooks one of the grounds used to justify colonialism and slavery – the moral underdevelopment or 'deceitful' nature of the 'Other' races (Sahay 2007: para 2).

The exploitation of non-human animals is also justified on the grounds that since non-human animals are lesser beings on account of the differences described above, our abuse of them can be explained as being 'natural' rather than 'social' (Rollin 2003a). When human beings exploit other species, it is deemed to be a 'natural' (and morally excusable) phenomenon and, therefore, not a matter for social science critique. However, when humans exploit each other on account of caste, class, race, or gender differences, it becomes an act of injustice – the consequence of 'social hierarchies'; a phenomenon that is worthy of entering the social science imagination. This line of reasoning is reminiscent of a time not too long ago when exploitation of non-white people was justified as 'natural-normal-right' because of 'natural' differences between races like the inferior intelligence and moral depravity of colonised peoples.

Lessons from History on Difference-based Exploitation

Insofar as it is just a listing of differences, no real problem exists. An inherently flawed leap of logic occurs when we use these perceived differences to make ethical judgments (Sorabji 1993; Alessio 2008). Difference, as feminist theory has argued, is not valid grounds for exploitation (Alcoff 2000).

Over the centuries, exploitative relationships have been legitimised by the construction of hierarchies based on perceived differences among the constituent groups (Alessio 2008). While such hierarchies manifest themselves in varied and intricate ways, what is often common to them[9] is that they are constructed by dominant groups through a systematic process of devalorisation that assigns inferior value to aspects of real or imagined difference in the subaltern group, thus legitimising their control and utilisation as a 'resource'. For example, the non-white races were deemed to be intellectually and morally inferior, dalits were supposed to have been 'born' lesser people, and non-human animals are supposed to lack the ability to reason considered 'unique' to human beings. White ethnic groups used the non-white races as a resource for physical labour, upper-caste groups used dalits as a resource for carrying out tasks that they did not want to do, and humans use non-human animals as a 'natural resource' to further human personal and economic well-being.

It is now recognised that criteria used to identify exclusionary difference are based on concepts created by the dominant group and are often not relevant to the devalorised group; and 'those who start from a position of social control have the advantage of creating, defining, and applying the key concepts that ultimately determine [inclusion and exclusion]' (*ibid.*: 72). In the context of intra-human differences, IQ (intelligence quotient) scores, for instance, 'have no real meaning when used to compare groups .... [as they] ... are used to compare out-groups with the dominant in-group that created the IQ test' (*ibid.*: 71). Similarly, rationality, language and so on, have no real meaning when used to make moral judgments about non-human animals as they are all concepts that are created by the dominant group – humans – and based on human standards (Wolch 1998).

I would like to suggest that the adherence of the social sciences to the wider societal assumption that non-human animals are inferior and not worthy of ethical consideration is linked to a conscious or unconscious subscription to the hierarchies outlined above. While the social sciences have often questioned the 'objectivity' of the natural sciences (Haraway 1991), in this case, they have easily accepted the shaky (and oft-questioned) verdict that animals are inferior beings because of the various differences discussed above.

What is disregarded is that not only have many of these assumptions been debunked (Garner 2004; Francione 2008) but also that most of these differences (such as language, rationality) are not relevant criteria for ethical judgment. What does matter is that there is much reason to believe that they suffer – for moral concern, as we know it, presupposes the ability to feel and suffer (Rollin 2003a). As Jeremy Bentham famously said, what is important is not whether 'Can they reason? nor Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?' (1789: 325)

Furthermore, it is important to remind ourselves again that mainstream knowledge bodies have historically been implicated in difference-based exploitation. Edward Said describes how Orientalism is a system of knowledge that portrayed

> the Orient in terms of Western desires or Occidental notions of history, nature, culture, religion, society, man, rationality, etc., and represented it in terms of contrasting typologies within which inferior characters are attributed to the Orient: the vibrant Occidental man versus the sluggish Oriental, the scientific-rational Westerner versus the gullible-erratic Easterner, and the honest whites versus the deceitful non-whites...[and] [b]y setting up a binary of difference ... established a dominant and systematic discourse for describing, teaching and ruling the Orient' (Sahay 2007: paras 2 and 3).

The parallels in the case of human–non-human animal relationships are evident. Therefore, it is important that the Indian social sciences are cognisant of this and deploy their critical-political role to its fullest.

A Case for Deeper Insight and Continuing Inclusiveness

Here is a question to the Indian social science academia: why are we so hesitant to engage with the morally questionable ways in which we relate to non-human animals? Is this because of some kind of basal fear that espousing such issues, that allowing them to enter the social science imagination, would threaten our known ways of life and our stable world? Or does it stem from the fear of being ridiculed as an elite 'animal lover'? Why is the debate on the moral status of non-humans constantly delegitimised?

Including the Non-human Animal

The explanation that our attitudes and actions towards the non-human are a manifestation of the 'survival of the fittest' does not fit well with the fact that while we invoke nature's 'inherent bloodiness' in justifying our exploitation of other species, we simultaneously set ourselves apart by claiming that the human is superior because he/she is *more* than biology and instinct. Furthermore, while it is impossible to deny the instinctual urge of the individual (human or non-human) to first protect the interests of the self (and immediate family), the use of the self-interest or self-defence arguments to legitimise institutional and large-scale exploitation of and violence towards other species is unjustifiable. In intra-human relationships too, self-defence is an acceptable argument in law for violence against the direct perpetrator of an attack against the individual. But large-scale violence and genocide is not (and should never be) considered legitimate.

R.D. Ryder notes that one common question is 'Isn't it natural to be speciesist?' (1989: 7). Biology tells us the supposition that natural selection takes place because 'it is good for the species' is incorrect, and that 'species as an entity does not answer to selection' (Mayr 1997: 2092). Based on this, I would like to suggest that 'species' is a constructed concept specific to the human imagination, and that other animals do not behave so as to benefit the 'species'. Their locus of concern is the individual (and immediate family). This is similar to the notion of human rights, where the concern is ultimately for the individual human. Therefore, it is *not* natural to be speciesist.

As has been discussed in the paper, it is difficult to conclude that non-human animals are inherently *inferior* and, even if we do so, this would only be even stronger reason to act towards them using high moral standards. It is precisely for voiceless groups like the cognitively challenged, children, and non-human animals that the critical-political role of the social science imagination becomes very significant.

It is possible to argue that there is no point in delving into these debates because the ways in which humans relate to non-human animals are too deeply entrenched to change. To this, it is Gandhi who provides an answer in *Hind Swaraj*. In the context of a discussion on how machinery has 'impoverished India', he says that the important thing is

> to realize that machinery is bad. We shall then be able gradually to do away with it. Nature has not provided any way whereby we may reach a desired goal all of a sudden. If, instead of welcoming machinery as a boon, we should [*sic*] look upon it as an evil, it would ultimately go' (Gandhi 1939: 93, see also 96-97).

Similarly, with respect to human–non-human relationships, the social sciences need to first recognise and challenge their ethically questionable nature, for without this first step, nothing can follow. A. Kothari offers a more direct argument, saying that while alternative, more benign ways of relating to other species may be referred to as 'romantic' or 'impractical', they are 'no more impractical than trying to achieve universal human welfare through industrialisation of any kind' (2009: 77).

History tells us that the field of social sciences has grown by expanding its boundaries to include previously excluded groups – from being a field that was focused on the interests of only the white male, to one that now includes the concerns of a much wider range of races, genders, and social groups. History also tells us that these groups were earlier excluded on the grounds that they were not of any significance to this field, just like how it is now held that non-human animals are not a relevant or legitimate subject of social science inquiry and politics. As A. Clarke notes, 'power operates to create silences and gaps, and the sins of omission in ... the social sciences ... have been profound' (2005: 76). The capacity to be sensitive to precedents and patterns, and engage with them in early stages, is extremely crucial for the social sciences. With respect to the human–non-human relationship, it is very clear that certain themes that have been identified in discourses around other forms of exploitation are repeating. For instance, the ease with which we use the term 'animal lover' to dismiss arguments that challenge human superiority and animal exploitation is, in a sense, an outright denial of the civil liberties discourse and the struggles that were undergone to shed the label 'nigger

lover'. Therefore, a truly self-reflexive and self-critical discipline would be cautious when it comes to dismissing injustice in human–non-human relationships – and consequently making the non-human animal 'abuseable' and 'killable' (Haraway 2008).

An Empathetic Imagination

By examining and critically deconstructing 'some common arguments related to human–non-human animal difference and the politics of knowledge, this paper has sought to establish that the Indian social sciences are not justified in ignoring and/or excluding non-human beings as subjects of concern. In so doing, it points to the need for Indian social science to recognise the often arbitrary (and yet deeply political) nature of its boundaries. While the paper has non-human animals as its analytical focus, the overall arguments are relevant to social science boundaries in general and the processes of inclusion/exclusion that they are implicated in. The example of non-human animals just goes to show how easily the social sciences can overlook, exclude, and dismiss without being aware of the inconsistencies in, lack of foundation for, and ethical problems with such positions.

While the paper dwelt on non-human animals, a re-specification of imaginative limits to include certain groups and not others, would be at cross purposes with the more fundamental point this paper seeks to make. And that is the need for the social sciences to be self-reflexive and critically self-aware, and be constantly engaged in a process of examining orthodoxies and boundaries that perpetuate its involvement in the reproduction of exploitative relationships. The role of the social science imagination becomes crucial where perceived differences are the greatest, and when exploitation is legitimised on such bases. It is my contention that the exclusionary and hegemonic impacts of such differences are the most severe when the degree of communication between the differing groups is minimal, as we saw in the discussions about reason, sentience, language, and the charge of elitism in preceding sections of the paper. And it is when communication, and consequently participation, is a limiting factor that a sensitive, empathetic imagination has a valuable part to play in questioning exclusionary boundaries. Therefore, for Indian social science to be the progressive field it seeks to be, it should guard against complacency about the rightness of its boundaries, and must heed Mills' call for a self-aware imagination that provides the space for multiple perspectives – human and non-human; Self and Other; Us and Them.[10]

Notes

1. I thank Sundar Sarukkai for pointing this out to me.
2. I use the term non-human animals to emphasise that the human is a subset of 'animal'.
3. Issues missed: 1960 Vol. 9 (1); 1988 Vol. 37.
4. Issues missed: 2000 Vol. 2 (1); 2003 Vol.5 (2).
5. I must clarify here that I am not defending the manner in which conservation is currently practised in India; I am only trying to point to the need to go beyond existing polarisations in the debate.
6. There may be cases in which disempowered people from different areas gather to present a united front on an issue even if the issue at hand does not affect all of them immediately; but even in such cases, it is the knowledge that they could face (or have faced or are facing) a similar threat that spurs such participation.
7. These bans augment animal suffering because when the cattle outlive their 'productive' lives, they are transported in the most deplorable conditions to states where such slaughter is allowed.
8. As Garner points out, 'awareness of pain is functional for survival since animals can take steps to avoid it. It makes evolutionary sense, therefore, to impute sentiency to human and non-human animals, whereas it does not for plants who do not have the capacity to escape from harm' (2004:11-12).
9. Of course, power structures and hierarchies without any underlying construction of difference do exist, say, for instance, hierarchies that are imposed by brute force.
10. The idea for this paper emerged during the Summer School for Philosophy (2007) organised by the Centre for Philosophy, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer, N. Jayaram, Sundar Sarukkai, Rajesh Kasturirangan, Vijay K. Nagaraj, and Geoffrey Tan for their feedback.

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'Indigenisation' not 'Indianisation' of Psychiatry: An Anthropological Perspective

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This paper adopts an anthropological approach to the understanding of psychiatry in post-colonial India. It examines how national and local contexts modify the universal theories and practices that come to define psychiatry as a medical speciality. It begins with a brief history of psychiatry in India. This is followed by an in-depth analysis of seminal writings by Indian psychiatrists to highlight the cultural underpinnings of concepts of mental health, mental illness, and treatment. Certain key themes of anthropological interest emerging in the course of this analysis are the existence of a strong ethnological paradigm in Indian psychiatry, a range of culture-bound conditions, and the development of culturally sensitive therapeutic approaches.

[Keywords: indigenisation; Indianisation; mental health; mental illness; psychiatry]

In an era of unprecedented developments in genetics and biotechnology that are transforming our understanding of the brain and threatening deeply cherished notions of the human mind, consciousness, emotions, and intellect, it is hard to imagine that not so long ago another very different set of explanatory concepts were deployed to account for the very same phenomena. Personality types, religion, childhood experiences, the Oedipus complex, social class, and a host of other socio-economic, psychological, and cultural factors were drawn upon to explain mental life in both health and illness. In fact, from the 1960s to the 1980s, a distinct cultural paradigm developed in Indian psychiatry that drew upon Hindu religions texts, Ayurveda, and other distinctive socio-cultural realities to explain the Indian psyche. This was accompanied by a sociological trend to specifically explore the relationship between the

family, gender and mental illness. This paper[1] explores the cultural configurations that appear to be disappearing from a profession now almost totally dominated by genetic markers, biochemical and electrical brain activity, MRI (magnet resonance imagining), and mood and behaviour-altering drugs.

Within the well-established discipline of the history of medicine in India, the history of psychiatry has emerged as an important area of academic research (Ernst 1991; Basu 1999; Mills 2000). Following the method of discourse analysis pioneered by Michel Foucault (1988/1967), these scholars have dwelt upon the multiple linkages between the colonial state and psychiatry, indigenous medical systems, socio-economic change, and cultural practices. This paper begins where these accounts end. Due to the overarching preoccupation with political and economic hegemony of the colonial state, psychiatry remained more or less an alien discourse during the colonial era, distinct from the local context into which it was transplanted. The post-Independence era has witnessed a rapid indigenisation of the discipline. This paper contends that a strong cultural relativist perspective permeates psychiatry in India.

The analysis of the indigenisation of psychiatry is primarily based on a content analysis of the *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* over the past four decades. This journal has been the official organ of the Indian Psychiatric Society since 1958. Periodically generated documents, such as professional journals, are an important source for charting longitudinal discursive changes offering the possibility of both quantitative and qualitative analysis. For instance, a cursory review of the table of contents of articles appearing in this journal during the 1960s and 1970s highlights the salience of cultural psychiatry; contrast this with the burgeoning of articles on biological psychiatry during the 1990s. This change in focus is an outcome of global developments in the disciplines of neuropsychiatry, psychopharmacology, and genetics configuring local research and practice in India.

The first part of this paper is a short overview of the development of psychiatry in India from the colonial period to the present. Since psychopathology has been historically entangled with the law, issues of mental health legislation and policy are intertwined with discussions on diagnosis and treatment in this historical account. Although Indian psychiatrists have, by and large, followed the dominant theoretical and therapeutic trends of their western colleagues, this has not resulted in blind imitation. The distinctive socio-cultural contexts in which they, as cultural actors, have been socialised and in which they practise, have come to impinge on their work and their professional identity. Although

this reflexivity may not be easily discernible in clinical practice, it foregrounds their research endeavours. It is this critical self-appraisal of professional practice which constitutes the second part of this paper. The focus is on cultural embeddedness of the psychiatric discourse as reflected in major psychiatric constructs, syndrome profiles, and therapeutic modalities. The question that I pose is simply: how has culture impinged on psychiatric theory and practice in India? By this I am in no way trying to undermine the influential role of other factors, such as the discovery of new and more effective pharmacological agents and the international emphasis on primary health care and its sequel in community psychiatry. My focus is, however, on the impact of the cultural, religious and symbolic domains on psychiatric theorising, clinical practice and research.

The Development of Psychiatry in India: An Overview

From the Mental to the General Hospital

The earliest mental hospitals in South Asia were set up in India. Although the Portuguese introduced ideas of western medicine and hospital treatment, the first such hospital for the isolation of mentally disturbed persons was started in Bombay in 1745. The establishment of similar institutions in the other two Presidencies followed, that is, in Calcutta in 1787 and in Madras in 1794. These places were mainly built for the treatment of European soldiers, a fact reflected in their barrack-like architecture.

According to psychiatrists S. Sharma and L.P. Varma (1984), these developments have to be examined in the light of the unstable socio-political conditions of the time which put the English army under great psychological strain. There was the decline of the Moghuls in Delhi, accompanied by the rise of the Marathas on the West Coast and the Sikhs in the North.[2] Furthermore, there was a tussle for supremacy between the English and the French in the South. One of the many consequences of this social cauldron was the construction of mental asylums on the Indian subcontinent. Furthermore, higher rates of mental disorder among Europeans were also attributed to the uncongenial tropical climate. In her study of psychiatric institutionalisation in British India, the English historian Waltraud Ernst regards the development of mental hospitals essentially as a response of the colonial elite to the problems of vagrancy and delinquency posed by its lower-class countrymen since: 'the

maintenance of discipline among European troops and the preservation of public peace among European civilians were a major preoccupation of colonial rule' (1988: 30).

Thus, the enforcement of army discipline and the measures against European vagrancy, on the one hand, and the institutionalisation of European lunatics, on the other, were closely interrelated. In many cases, those classified as insane had a prior history of being convicted for vagrancy or court-martialled following their desertion or discharge from the army. Transferring them to a lunatic asylum was the solution adopted by the civil and military authorities to this vexed state of affairs. The same structural parameters of race, class and gender, along which colonial society was divided, were reproduced inside the asylum. For example, Ernst informs us that the pastimes available to occupants were in keeping with colonial preconceptions. While the European inmates were encouraged to read and participate in games compatible with polite English company, the natives were made to engage in combative games and animal husbandry. Consequently, 'the choice of pastimes thus reinforced the stereotype ideal of the European – superior in intellect and manners – as opposed to that of the typical Indian – given to fighting and accustomed to caring for animals' (*ibid.*: 36). It is also important to note that, while class distinctions between the European inmates were carefully preserved and reflected in the provisions and amenities made available to them, the caste and religious sentiments of the native inmates were completely ignored in the organisation of asylum life.

By the early 19th century, psychiatry had become an integral part of the colonial system of social welfare reproducing the categories of racial differences in yet another context. This period witnessed the establishment of mental hospitals in the major cities on the subcontinent. Their earlier social exclusiveness was eroded by an increase in the number of native inmates. Bromides, hydrotherapy, blood-letting by leeches were the main therapeutic measures employed to subdue the inmates. It was only during the early part of the 20th century that any ameliorative changes were introduced, probably in response to the adverse publicity given to the living conditions in these establishments. When combined with the growing popular demand for social reform, a number of administrative measures were initiated. Mental hospitals, which were hitherto under the charge of the inspector generals of prisons, were put under the charge of civil surgeons. Secondly, a government ordinance was issued to the effect that specialists in psychiatry were to be appointed full-time officers in these hospitals. Thirdly, a central legislation, the India Lunacy Act, was passed in 1912 to regulate their

functioning. Lastly, in 1920, the expression 'mental asylum' was replaced by 'mental hospital' by a government ruling signifying, at least at the level of administrative discourse, a change in approach from custodial care to medical treatment. No other significant development took place in psychiatry in India till Independence in 1947, apart from the formation of the Indian Association of Mental Hygiene in 1929 and of the Indian Psycho-Medical Association in 1938. The latter was a branch of the parent British organisation which, subsequently, became the Indian Psychiatric Society in 1948.

India's Independence coincided with critical developments in psychiatry. New generation of psychoactive drugs, such as the neuroleptics, made it possible to manage psychotic patients in the community. Long-term incarceration of the mentally ill was no longer necessary. The concept of primary health care for managing the health status of body populations was gaining momentum. These developments influenced the post-Independence Indian state's health agenda on the provision of an integrated package of curative and preventive services through a nation-wide network of primary urban and rural health care centres (Bhore 1946). Only four new mental hospitals have been constructed after Independence, that is, one each in Hyderabad in 1953, in Srinagar (Kashmir) in 1958, at Jamnagar (Gujarat) in 1960, and in Delhi in 1966. Clearly, the era of segregation into prison-like establishments had come to an end and the focus of treatment for psychiatric patients shifted to the wards and outpatient departments of general hospitals. Today, the mental hospitals in the country continue to function; none of them has been formally shut down to symbolise a formal de-institutionalisation movement. Changes in architecture and organisational procedures more in keeping with contemporary psychiatric practice have been initiated. Despite these changes, most mental hospitals continue to embody the old concepts of custodial care and medical supervision. Overcrowding was estimated to be in the range of 200 per cent. They are places of ill omen, dumping grounds', where relatives abandon their burdensome members, despairing of their ever recovering (Carstairs 1973). In some hospitals the fatality rates are unacceptably high. The grim situation in such establishments is highlighted by occasional media reports.[3]

The transition from mental hospital to general hospital psychiatry was made possible by modern psychotropic drugs. Furthermore, the comparative cost-effectiveness of psychiatry units in general hospitals resulted in their proliferation during the 1960s and 1970s. The first such units came up in the King Edward Memorial Hospital and Jamshetji

Jeejeebhoy Hospital in Bombay during the 1940s. Initially, they were established in general hospitals attached to medical colleges but later, they also came up in government, private, and missionary hospitals. They are now an integral part of major hospitals in all the state capitals and other large cities of the country. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala, every district hospital has a psychiatry unit.

The general consensus among mental health professionals seems to be that psychiatric treatment in general hospital settings has enhanced their professional credibility and respectability. It has also produced a more favourable public attitude towards both the mentally ill and their families. Medicalisation has reduced stigmatisation. There are no legal restrictions on admission and treatment. Proximity to other medical facilities ensures thorough investigations and early detection of other co-existing pathological conditions. The research generated by such psychiatry units far outweighs the research output of mental hospitals.

Thus, the shift of focus from the mental to the general hospital has brought in its wake, not only a change in treatment modalities, but also a different conception of mental illness and of the mentally ill person. Nonetheless, a division between mental hospital and general hospital psychiatry persists in psychiatry in India, even though both formally operate within a conceptual framework that combines biological, psychological, and social interventions (Wig 1989).

Mental Health Legislation and the Psychiatric Critique

It will be noted that the function of the psychiatric diagnosis is not confined to the medical context. The law plays an important role in the process. In her critical appraisal of the laws relating to the mentally ill in India, Amita Dhanda (1995) argues that one of the approaches adopted by adjudicators towards psychiatric evidence of mental illness is an 'expertise deferent' approach. Thus, courts often assume that a psychiatric diagnosis is tantamount to legal determination of 'unsoundness of mind'. The other approach adopted by adjudicators is, what she calls, an 'expertise distinguishing' approach, which formally eschews an equation between psychiatric and legal definitions of insanity: psychiatric evidence is regarded as being relevant but not decisive of the legal determination

Based on the British mental health legislation, a number of laws were passed in India after the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown.[4] The most important was the Indian Lunacy Act (ILA) of 1912, which enabled a magistrate, with or without medical opinion, to declare a person to be insane, order her/his

incarceration and appoint caretakers to look after her/his property. The Act placed far more emphasis on the property than the well-being of the afflicted person. While 'lunatic' was summarily described as 'an idiot or a person of unsound mind' there were forty-six sections dealing with the administration of her/his property. Furthermore, ILA made no distinction between the mentally ill and the mentally retarded, nor did it make any mention of the patient's rights or informed consent for treatment. Its explicit purpose was simply to safeguard society against the danger posed by the lunatic rather than to provide therapy and guarantee basic human rights to the mentally disturbed.

Soon after its inception in 1948, the Indian Psychiatric Society had drafted and actively canvassed for the adoption of more liberal mental health legislation. The old Lunacy Act, however, continued to be in operation till April 1993, when the Mental Health Act (MHA) of 1987 replaced it. The main features of this act are (a) incorporation of modern concepts of mental illness and treatment, (b) primacy of the role of medical officers, (c) simplification of the rules of admission and discharge, (d) protection of human rights of patients, (e) providing for supervision of the standard of care in psychiatric hospitals (by creating the Mental Health Authority), (f) provision of penalties in case of breach of laws in connection with welfare of the patients, and (g) care and not custody as the ultimate aim.

In contrast to ILA, MHA has a whole section dealing with the protection of 'Human Rights of Mentally Ill Persons'.[5] It also differentiates between the mentally ill and the mentally retarded and eschews the use of such terms as 'lunatic', 'insane', 'idiot', and 'unsound mind'. A mentally ill person is simply defined as one who is in need of treatment by reason of any mental disorder other than mental retardation. The Act calls for regular visits by visitors to duly licensed psychiatric hospitals and also contains provisions for setting up of a Mental Health Authority.

Although the Indian Psychiatric Society had actively lobbied for the passage of this Act, it is not without its critics. Even before it had been passed by Parliament, S.M. Channabasavanna (1985), a leading psychiatrist in the country, criticised the new law. Not only did he point to certain lacunae in the legislation, but he even questioned the need for such legal provisions in the first place. He argued that, with the greater medicalisation of mental illness and its treatment, there was no need for a separate law to interfere in the affairs of psychiatric practice. He felt that, 'The treatment and care of psychiatric patients can be better without the law' (*ibid.*: 181). Admission for treatment should be voluntary and, if the

patient is not in a position to give consent, the relatives can sign on her/his behalf. The management of the ill person's property falls within the legal sphere, but it need not be part of an Act dealing with admission and discharge procedures.

In general hospital psychiatry units, patients are admitted and discharged on the same terms as other medically ill patients. Consequently, Channabasavanna wondered why there should be a differentiation amongst psychiatric patients, depending on where they present themselves for treatment. This discrimination in admission to mental and general hospitals should, therefore, be abolished. Secondly, the certification and de-certification procedures are highly controversial. With the availability of mental health professionals, the role of magistrates and board of visitors is questionable. Thirdly, the empowerment of homeopaths, Ayurvedic doctors and other non-MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery) physicians to certify admissions is contradictory, since death, medical, and fitness certificates issued by these practitioners are invalid for insurance and other related purposes. Lastly, the licensing system is as complicated as the admission procedures, both being out of touch with the present medical reality of psychiatric illness and its treatment. This leads to unintentional segregation and stigmatisation of both psychiatric patients and practitioners.

Although, MHA makes provisions for private psychiatrists, it excludes psychoanalysts, psychologists, and psychiatric social workers from the field of experts. This has the dual effect of curtailing access to mental health care and further medicalising many social problems. Given the fact that psychiatrists in this country are hardly trained in non-invasive therapies, the Act does not lay down any regulation on the irrational use of drugs and ECT (electroconvulsive therapy), the primary treatment modalities in psychiatry in India. Lastly, MHA is silent on suicide and mentally ill prisoners.

It is, however, ironic that the very instrument that Channabasavanna had so forcefully criticised, was the means of two landmark judgments. In a public interest litigation suit, the Supreme Court, on 18 August 1993, declared jailing of the mentally ill as unconstitutional and recognised mental health care as a basic right of individuals. In yet another judgment, in April 1994, the apex court declared punishment of persons attempting suicide under Section 309 of the Indian Penal Code as unconstitutional, and thus paved the way for the de-criminalisation of attempted suicide.

Discrepancies between Mental Health Laws and Policies

The National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) formally came into operation in 1982. Deriving from the principles of primary health care enunciated in the Alma Ata Declaration of Health for All By the Year 2000 (WHO 1978), NMHP envisages the management of common mental disorders in the community. It stipulates the assignment of appropriate tasks to primary health centre personnel. While the primary-health-centre doctors are to be trained to recognise, treat, and make referrals to specialists and to take steps to prevent mental disorders, health workers are required to educate people in general about mental morbidity as well as to do the referral, follow-up and rehabilitation of actual cases in their catchment areas. The health workers are also taught to manage psychiatric emergencies such as suicide attempts and acute excitement in the absence of a doctor. The National Mental Health Programme is a bold initiative to develop an effective mental health delivery system using locally available manpower and infrastructure. As in the case of MHA, NMHP is not without its critics among mental health professionals. It is exclusively based on a medical model of management without a proper focus on rehabilitation and aftercare of the severely mentally disturbed. It also neglects the gender dimensions of psychopathology.

A number of basic contradictions in the government's approach to mental health care appear when the two major documents, namely, MHA and NMHP are juxtaposed. Despite the emphasis of the latter on community mental health care, MHA, which came into effect more than a decade later in 1993, makes no mention of these matters. While the thrust of state policy is on decentralisation, the law appears to be more concerned with limiting the field to psychiatrists, which flies in the face of any attempt at community participation. These contradictions stem from underlying theoretical differences. While the community mental health movement is grounded in theories of life stress, social support, social networks, and family life, the legislation is rooted in outdated ideas of incarceration and segregation of the mentally ill. The fact, nonetheless, remains that both these approaches characterise contemporary psychiatry and state mental health policy in India. None of the over forty mental hospitals has been shut down. On the other hand, prestigious institutions like the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) at Bangalore and the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) at Chandigarh are conducting active and successful community mental health projects,

which involve not only other medical and paramedical personnel but the communities as well. It is this chequered state of affairs which is revealed by the disjunction in the enunciative modalities between NMHP and MHA.

The initial pilot programmes and demonstration projects undertaken to train primary health care personnel in the early 1970s and 1980s proved the feasibility of this approach. Several manuals and modules have been developed for this purpose and many extension programmes are being undertaken by medical colleges throughout the country. However, as with other top-down programmes, the ambitious targets have not been reached; NMHP still remains a pilot programme without having become an intrinsic part of the primary health care system in the country.

This cursory overview of the development of psychiatry in India reveals that it is only now emerging from its marginal position, both within state policy and the medical profession. Professional expansion in terms of training, practice, and research opportunities in general hospital psychiatry initiated the process. The enunciation of NMHP and the revision of the old Lunacy Act have contributed to enhancing the status of the discipline and to reducing, to some extent, the social stigma attached to the mentally ill. Lastly, the NGO sector is beginning to play an important role in educating the public about mental disorders and providing treatment and rehabilitation facilities in the community (Patel and Thara 2003).

Ethnological Paradigm in Indian Psychiatry

The growth of psychiatry in India has followed a pattern of professional evolution characteristic of other contemporary disciplines in post-colonial societies, that is, the transplantation of Eurocentric discourses and their subsequent integration in the host society through acculturation, subtly altering but not snapping links with the culture of origin. Paralleling the transcultural study of psychopathology in the western psychiatric literature, articles appearing in the *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* have focussed on the cultural re-interpretation of major psychiatric syndromes, their phenomenology and therapy. The Hindu scriptures and indigenous medical systems are the filters through which western psychiatric concepts have been questioned. Thus, Indian psychiatrists have made attempts to correlate schizophrenia with *unmada,* the equivalent of insanity in the Ayurvedic texts (Unnikrishnan 1964; Mahal *et al.* 1977) and to test the efficacy of Ayurvedic

preparations in its treatment through case-control studies (Dattaray *et al.* 1964; Mahal *et al,* 1976). This approach of cultural analysis, re-interpretation, and treatment has also been applied to other psychiatric conditions.

Ethnomedical and Religious-Symbolic Systems and Mental Health

Perhaps, the most striking instance of cultural configuration of psychiatric thinking is demonstrated by the research on the impact of the ethnomedical and religious symbolic systems on concepts of mental illness and health. Scholars like A. Venkoba Rao (1964, 1978), N.S. ·Vahia *et al.* (1966), and L.P. Varma (1974) point to the interweaving of the ethnomedical and religious idioms in ancient Indian thought. Among the scriptures, the *Bhagavat Gita* has been repeatedly singled out to highlight the nature and predicament of the Indian *psyche.* According to Rao, 'Gita is a work on basic human dynamic psychology par excellence, and a masterpiece of psychotherapy' (1984: 55).

Indian psychiatrists have repeatedly acknowledged the ethnocentrism of western psychotherapeutic paradigms and attempts have been made to find viable alternatives. According to S.K. Pande (1968), since western psychotherapy is grounded in the Judaeo-Christian tradition, it is of limited use in the Indian context. On the other hand, fusing concepts from psychoanalysis and the *Bhagavad Gita,* D. Satyanand (1972) developed a method of 'soul analysis' that co-ordinates the various dimensions of personality in the whole man. In a similar vein, Vahia *et al.* (1972, 1973a, 1973b) have tried to use concepts of *ashtang yoga* in the treatment of mental disorders, apparently with good results.

Ayurveda treats mental disorders under the rubric *bhoot vidya* (demonology), with evil spirits being regarded as the main agents of mental affliction. Other models of disease causation within the Ayurvedic tradition attribute mental illness to an imbalance in the three principal humours *(tridosha),* namely, wind, bile, and phlegm. When the humour in excess circulates towards the heart (seat of the mind) and blocks the channels and ducts leading to it, mental affliction is the outcome. Thus, Ayurveda proposes both a religio-magical (demonological) and somato-psychic theory of mental illness, traces of which have filtered into folk models of psychopathology. In her analysis of psychiatric pluralism in Bengal, D.P. Bhattacharyya (1983) has identified the conceptual mix, characterising the explanatory models of mental illness of both patients and their families. This cognitive pluralism incorporates possession

states by ghosts with the effects of sorcery and head disturbance associated with heat and bile.

Indigenous Ayurvedic pharmacopoeias, used in the treatment of mental disorders, have been experimentally tested in medical settings to assess their relative efficacy against standard psychotropic drugs (Dattaray *et al.* 1964; Hakim 1964; Mahal *et al.* 1976). The general finding of these studies seems to be that indigenous drugs are more or less as effective as modern tranquilisers in managing both psychotic and neurotic disorders. It is ironical that there has not been more serious research on the psychopharmacological potentialities of Ayurveda from a biomedical perspective, given the fact that the first report of successful treatment of psychoses came from India, when C. Sen and K.C. Bose (1931) used *rauwolfa serpentina* (reserpine) extract for this purpose, more than two decades before the antipsychotics came into routine use.

While one strand of ethnological research in psychiatry in India has focussed on testing the relative efficacy of indigenous treatment modalities *vis-à-vis* western psychiatric and psychotherapeutic interventions, another strand can be located in the area of cultural re-interpretation of basic psychological categories, such as the efforts to define the workings of the Indian mind in terms of the tenets of the *Bhagavad Gita.* In a similar vein, J.S. Neki has analysed the Sikh notion of *saheja,* which he likens both to 'a process and a state characterised by equipoise and nascent freedom bringing about harmony both within the self and in its relation to the environment and culminating in illumination' (1975: 6).

J.P. Balodhi (1991) equates the Indian notion of holistic health with George L. Engel's (1977) concept of the bio-psychosocial model of medical practice incorporating the organic, socio-cultural and psychological dimensions of both illness and health. According to Balodhi, the *Vedas, Puranas, Brahmanas, Upanishads,* and the epics conceptualise the person in her/his total environment, which includes both her/his present worldly status and her deeds in previous incarnations. That is why medical pluralism is the keynote of traditional medical systems, embedded as they are in the belief that any illness, including mental illness, requires a multi-therapeutic approach, that is, medicinal, spiritual, and occult.

The conflation of traditional conceptual categories and those of the western psychiatric discourse has occurred in various ways, but perhaps the most well-known example is the application of the *guru-chela* (preceptor-disciple) paradigm to the therapist-patient relationship. Following up on the psychiatrist-anthropologist G.M. Carstairs' (1965)

idea of the salience of this model in Indian culture, Neki (1973, 1974) formulated it into a formal psychotherapeutic paradigm for use in clinical settings. It does not represent any mundane dyadic relationship such as parent-child with its accompanying transference and counter-transference. The *guru* embodies the authority of the culture: he is in this world and simultaneously out of it. This transaction has a spiritual and religious basis and dictates a more active role for the *guru* than endorsed by the western psychotherapeutic paradigm for the therapist. For Neki (1976), the concept of dependency is as ethnocentric as any other western psychological notion. Dependency is integral to the socialisation process in India and does not carry the same pejorative connotations attributed to it in contemporary individualistic cultures. Indian parents actively foster dependency in their children and any attempt at self-assertion is immediately interpreted as rebellion. According to Neki, dependence and dependability are inextricably interwoven in personal and social development. Situated within the life-cycle, Indian parents ensure that the younger generation develops dependent personalities, which, in turn, will guarantee that they themselves are cared for in their declining years. Thus, dependency is not a bugbear of psychotherapy in India, as it is in the West. The Indian therapist not only accepts dependency leanings as normal, but also works towards their displacement on significant others around the patient. Against this backdrop, there has been a lot of discussion among Indian professionals on the need to develop more culturally relevant psychotherapeutic models that take into account the specificities of Indian conditions and personality structure.

Culture-Bound Conditions

The principal factor leading to the development of the discipline of cross-cultural psychiatry was the discovery of the existence of distinctive culture-bound syndromes with culturally embedded manifestations and etiologic explanations. Indian psychiatrists have also identified certain psychopathological reactions with high cultural loading. The most well-known of these is the *dhat* or semen-loss syndrome, originally described by N.N. Wig in 1960. The prototypical clinical case is of a young man of lower socio-economic status and poor educational background. In addition to physical and mental exhaustion, the patient presents multiple somatic complaints, which he attributes to the passage of semen in the urine. He also feels guilty about the loss of semen, which he connects to over-indulgence in masturbation or sexual intercourse. In the folk and

Ayurvedic medical systems, such symptomatology is recognised as a distinct illness, for which many herbal and non-herbal remedies exist. In the clinical context, Indian psychiatrists have translated semen-loss syndrome as male potency disorder characterised by clinical depression.

Suchi-bai condition (literally, purity mania) has been defined as a type of obsessional neurosis in Bengali culture. In a society in which the most ordinary activities of daily life such as eating, washing, and cooking are ritualised and infused with a holy significance, the boundary between normal observance and pathological preoccupation may get blurred. According to Ajita Chakraborty (1975a, 1975b), the lives of women are more ritualised than those of men. In addition to performing the routine household chores, they are the principal participants in the numerous prayers and fasts that characterise the Hindu calendar. Consequently, they are more subject to the dictates of social customs and taboos; and among certain groups such as widows, the observance of such pollution rules may border on the pathological.

Socio-cultural factors not only contribute to the emergence of distinctive psychiatric symptomatic clusters, but they also mould the pathogenesis and manifestation of mental disorders in general. While such impact is more discernible at the level of psychiatric phenomeno-logy, it also configures the treatment and outcome of mental disorders. Cross-cultural studies show higher rates of somatisation among psychiatric patients in non-western societies. The western psychiatric patients, it is alleged, have a greater tendency towards psychologisation of distress. Several explanations have been put forward to account for this difference in symptomatic presentation. The non-western languages, such as Tamil, have no dualistic separation between psychological and somatic aspects of experience (Kleinman and Kleinman 1985). Since personal meaning and social structural complexes frame the expression of distress, inadequate social support systems and limited opportunities to ventilate feelings are likely to facilitate physical expressions of negative emotions (Nichter 1982). The existence of sharp divisions between male and female domains and cultural codes regulating sexuality and feelings of shame also influence the mode of expression of pain, especially among women (Pugh 1991). It has been observed that a majority of Indian patients often use the somatic idiom to express psychological distress. Complaints of gas (*vata*) in various body regions emerge as a salient somatic idiom of psychic distress. Its connection with the Ayurvedic notion of an excess of wind (*vata*) resulting in disease comes to mind.

Several psychiatrists have noted that guilt is not integral to the depressive experience in a majority of Indian patients. The inability to perform one's social roles is, in fact, more likely to precipitate feelings of shame (Bhattacharya and Vyas 1969; Bagadia *et al.* 1973a, 1973b, 1973c; Sethi *et al.* 1973). It will be observed that the distinction between guilt and shame is related to the source of the discomfort, that is, shame is connected with the feeling of discomfiture arising out of the failure to meet social expectations and the fear of loss of face in front of others. Guilt, on the other hand, is a more intra-psychic phenomenon linked to notions of individual responsibility, self-worth, and conscience. Where illness is attributed to external forces such as *karma,* the will of god or possession by evil spirits, feelings of shame are more likely to ensue. Where the affliction is attributed to deficits, physical or psychological, within the individual herself, guilt is more likely to be the outcome.

Culturally Sensitive Therapies

In view of the definitive role of culture in the genesis and manifestation of psychiatric disorders, Indian psychiatrists have expressed a sense of dissatisfaction with the blind application of treatment approaches developed in the West (Ananth 1981). As far back as 1964, N.C. Surya and S.S. Jayaram lamented the western orientation of Indian psychiatrists trained in an alien language and conceptual frameworks. They observed:

> The Indian Patient is more ready to accept overt situational support, less ready to seek intra-psychic explanations, more insistent and importunate with regard to personal needs and time, more ready to discard ego boundaries and involve the therapist in direct role relationships and finally in his ideal or idealized support in the good joint family Elder (*sic*) (1964: 154).

According to B. B. Sethi (1977), an indigenous psychotherapeutic model should take cognisance of the specific problems encountered in the Indian setting such as poverty, malnutrition, over-population, etc. Individual-centred psychotherapies are unsuitable since the family is not the focus of the therapy. According to Sethi, 'it is essential that families function as therapeutic units', and 'stable families in the long run would lead to stable individuals and the stable society' (*ibid.*: 1).

In a similar vein, A.S. Mahal (1975) had commented on the impossibility of an exclusive therapeutic relationship between a patient and a doctor in which the family does not play a formal part. Taking the

example of how neurotic patterns in a family member often find support from a relative, for example, a hysterical girl finding reinforcement from her over-protective mother, he suggests a tripartite therapeutic encounter between the doctor, the patient, and a significant relative to be more effective in treatment than a simple dyadic interaction between therapist and patient. On the basis of his observation in professional practice, Mahal presents a four-fold typology of Indian families. Most poor Indian families fall in the category of what he calls 'leaderless families'. They are characterised by child-like behaviour of members, present-orientation with no long-term goals, and poor respect for elders who provide poor leadership. There is competition for scarce resources as well as deep attachment among members with short-lived quarrels over resource-sharing. There are marginal differences in behaviour between grown-ups and children. In 'split families', on the other hand, there is a constant competition for leadership among two or more persons. This often occurs in households where the senior male is an ineffectual leader, while the mother or grandmother has good leadership qualities. This competition splits the family unit into two or more quarrelling factions with individuals taking sides according to their advantage. Co-operation is minimal. In 'authoritarian families', the unity and harmony of the family unit depends on whether the patriarch or matriarch is benevolent or selfish and insensitive. The families with 'democratic leaders' are the ideal type since they are characterised by unity, co-operation and amity. It will be noted that this four-fold division is based on only one criterion, namely, leadership or distribution of authority within the joint family. Other features such as family composition, nature of household and pattern of distribution of income have not been taken into account in this classification.

There are several polarities in terms of which Indian clinicians distinguish between dominant or modal personality patterns of Indians vis-à-vis their western counterparts. These, in turn, are shown to have a decisive impact on the nature of psychotherapeutic practice in the two settings. Firstly, Indians are regarded as being more emotionally dependent, implying that any therapy, which is based on working towards a high level of individualisation and autonomy, is unlikely to make much headway in the Indian clinical context. That is why Neki proposed the *guru-chela* paradigm as an alternative, since it fosters both dependency and well-being in a fashion congruent with dominant cultural values. The patient's expectations, when approaching the therapist in this model, are not grounded in terms of individualism or free expression, but are framed by what R.F. Torrey and J. Hsu (1972) refer

to as the 'edifice complex', that is, a lay person or disciple approaching an exalted personage.

The therapist is expected, under such circumstances, to play a more active role in decision-making on behalf of patients and their families (Surya and Jayaram 1964). Indian psychiatrists are more active than their western counterparts. They make suggestions, express sympathy, manipulate the environment, instruct and reassure (V.K. Varma 1982). The problem in strictly applying the tenet of confidentiality is evident given the nature of the family's role in psychotherapy. Finally, it has been found that the social distance between psychiatrists and their clients in terms of caste, class, and gender is more amenable to a filial, avuncular, or paternal rather than a purely professional relationship.

It is not only the environing social structure which fosters inter-dependence; cosmological and religious beliefs also contribute to sustaining it. Interpreting illness essentially in terms of physical and metaphysical, and not psychological, factors seems to fly in the face of the psychotherapeutic endeavour itself, when defined as an interpersonal method of mitigating suffering through persuasion and other forms of psychological manipulation. The connection between the doctrine of *karma* and feelings of guilt bears special meaning for psychotherapy. According to B.B. Sethi and S. Dube (1982), constructing illness in terms of *karma* leads to a sense of relief rather than guilt.

Possession: Pathology or Cultural Belief?

In psychiatric nosology, possession is associated with the psychiatric category of dissociative reaction, but it is also a culture-specific, psychiatric reaction by no means limited to the Indian subcontinent. The study of traditional healing practices has been a common terrain for both anthropologists and psychiatrists. For instance, Sudhir Kakar (1982) and Deborah Bhattacharyya (1983 and 1986) have done extensive work on psychiatric pluralism in India. Several Indian psychiatrists have under-taken research on the socio-demographic characteristics of traditional healers and their clients and on the efficacy of traditional therapeutic modalities such as trance and exorcism. They have realised the importance of these healers as therapeutic resources in the community and the need to understand their diagnostic and treatment systems. In addition to the work of D.C. Satija *et al.* in Rajasthan (1982), other psychiatric studies have been carried out by O. Somasundaram (1973) in Tamil Nadu and by J.K. Trivedi and B.B. Sethi (1979a, 1979b) in Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh). Contradicting the popular belief that illiterate

rural people are the ones who mainly avail of the services of such local practitioners, Satija *et al.* (1982) found that 80 per cent of the clients at the Balaji Temple were educated from the primary to the postgraduate levels and that the overwhelming majority of them came from the urban areas. The urban-rural ratio being 82 to 18 per cent, students, housewives, and the business community were the main occupational groups. Among motivational factors, it was found that failure of allopathic treatment was a major factor reported in 82 per cent of cases. This was followed by persuasion by family members and friends in 66 per cent of persons interviewed. People suffering from psychiatric disorders accounted for 92 per cent of the cases with the psychoneuroses, such as hysteria, anxiety states, and neurotic depression heading the list. A large number of cases reported considerable improvement or complete recovery after undergoing trance at the Mehandipur Temple.

In the clinical context, Indian psychiatrists have identified a distinctive, culture-specific, symptomatic cluster, which they refer to as the possession syndrome (Teja *et al*, 1970; Venkataramaiah *et al.* 1981). The belief in possession by one of the goddesses of the Hindu pantheon is a common cultural pattern. Subsuming it under the rubric of a culture-specific reaction signifies the professional recognition of the thin boundary between cultural belief and pathological reaction. The interpretation and treatment of possession syndrome in the clinical context requires the psychiatrist to walk a tight rope between pathologising it as a psychiatric disorder and, at the same time, respecting the patient's and even family's belief in a divine visitation. This negotiation is described by two clinicians in the following terms:

> Thus, where there was a belief like possession by a deity, it would be essential to accept and go along with the patient in the belief that the particular deity was giving the patient strength and use that strength to achieve the therapeutic end by getting the patient to conquer and resolve his conflicts. Likewise, where beliefs in certain cultural observances existed and neurotic symptoms were blamed for failure to carry out certain rituals, the patient should be advised to complete them and the treatment of neuroses should proceed along the usual lines (de Souza and Ramanan 1984: 197).

Psychiatry in India has evolved over an extended period of time: from the construction of mental hospitals during the rule of the East India Company to the present era of community psychiatry. During a greater part of this period, traditional medical concepts and treatment practices have not only been relegated to the background by the western trained

physicians, but actively opposed on grounds of epistemological validity
and therapeutic efficacy. The recent professional interest in trans-cultural
therapy and the need to target community therapeutic resources, such as
the family, have conferred some legitimacy on these age-old and time-
tested procedures.

Conclusion

This paper is a modest attempt in constructing a history of modern
psychiatry in India. It has attempted to highlight the multiple levels of
engagement between psychiatry, culture, and the political economy in
the Indian context. While in the first part, the historical backdrop
constituted the macro-context for discussion, the second part specifically
focused on the interface between culture and psychiatric practice at the
micro-level. This is not to say that there was no interface between
psychiatric practice and cultural imperatives during the colonial era.
Indeed, there is always an ineluctable interpenetration between culture
and discourse. But the difference lies in the degree of interpenetration.
My reading of the material convinces me that, during the colonial period,
maintenance of law and order and political control dominated the
practice of psychiatry in the clinic to an overwhelming extent. With the
attainment of Independence, this thraldom was somewhat loosened,
making it possible for psychiatrists to engage more actively with the
local context. Furthermore, the development of newer generation of
psychoactive drugs leading to community psychiatry and the inter-
national human rights movement not only undermined the traditional
segregation of the mentally ill but also compelled practitioners to
question the social, cultural, and economic underpinnings of their own
practice. The pioneering contributions of such Indian psychiatrists as A.
Venkoba Rao, J.S. Neki, N.N. Wig, B.B. Sethi, N.S. Vahia, and V.N.
Bagadia, among a host of others, cannot be undermined.

However, as the title of this paper indicates, the engagement with
culture even during the peak period between the 1960s and 1980s was
not able to generate a distinctive Indian tradition of psychiatry with
explanatory validity and therapeutic force to replace the key constructs of
the western discourse. The developments in biological psychiatry over
the past decades have further eroded this possibility. In addition, the
forces of globalisation and the proliferation of the internet have resulted
in the circulation of knowledge systems making explicit enculturation
even more difficult. So, while indigenisation is an inevitable process,
especially in disciplines dealing with human behaviour like psychiatry,

the possibility of a unique culturally-embedded Indian school of psychiatry may not be a realisable goal.

Notes

1. This paper is based on my ethnographic research on the psychiatric profession in India (Addlakha 2008).
2. The reference is to conflicts among certain ethnic groups in India.
3. There is also a flourishing private trade in lunacy brought to light by the Erwadi tragedy in 2001. On 6 August 2001, twenty-eight persons labelled as mentally ill perished in a fire in Badhusa private mental home in Erwadi Dargah of Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu. They were chained to their beds and could not escape the flames that engulfed their thatched huts. Their cries for help were ignored by the asylum owners mistaking them for the usual outbursts of the mentally ill.
4. These enactments were (a) The Lunacy (supreme court) Act, 1853 (Act 34 of 1858); (b) The lunacy (District Courts) Act, 1858 (Act 35 of 1858); (c) The Indian Lunatic Asylums Act (Act 360 of 1858); (d) The Military Lunatics Act, 1877 (Act 11 of 1877); (e) The Indian Lunatic Asylums (Amendment) Act, 1886 (Act 18 of 1886); and (f) The Indian Lunatic Asylums (Amendment) Act 1889 (Act 20 of 1889).
5. The Act categorically states that (a) patients may not be subjected to any indignity (physical or mental) or cruelty during treatment, (b) patients may not be used for research purposes unless this is of direct benefit to their diagnosis and treatment, (c) the responsibility for allowing research lies with the relatives of an incompetent patient; voluntary patients may not be used for research, even if it is to their benefit, without their consent, and (d) patients must be granted basic rights in conformity with human dignity (Section 81). Section 81 becomes all the more relevant in the light of the fact that a person loses her/his civil rights to vote, contract, and hold property upon being medically certified as being of unsound mind.

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Mega Transformation of Mumbai:
Deepening Enclave Urbanism*

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The neo-liberal market-driven economy has been affecting the economy and people of India in various ways. One directly visible impact is the agenda of transforming a few large cities into so-called 'world-class cities' as the hubs of operation of trans-national capital and business. Such urban renewal is resulting in further segregation of citizens into the elite class, who are settling in well-serviced and gated settlements, and the majority of the poor, who are being driven out from the core parts of cities to the peripheries. This 'enclave urbanism', as the logic of expansion of capital and revival of stagnant developing economies, is well articulated by scholars like David Harvey, Saskia Sassen, and Manuel Castells. Inspired by David Harvey's essay on 'the right to the city' in the context of South-East Asian countries, this paper analyzes the process of 'enclave urbanism' in Mumbai.

[Keywords: enclave urbanism; Mumbai; mega transformation; spatial segregation; urban renewal]

This paper focuses on the mega transformation of Mumbai under the neo-liberal paradigm of market-driven development. The transformation aims at converting Mumbai into a 'world-class city' for facilitating finance and business under transnational corporations. This urban renewal of the city is taking shape through demolition and reconstruction of existing housing/commercial structures, utilisation of vacant 'mill lands' for rich and commercial hubs, relocation of slum settlements from strategic spaces, and massive investment, mainly through debt finance in the city's infrastructure. Spaces for elite consumption (housing, shopping

malls, commercial centres, hotels, etc.) and widened roads for their automobiles are resulting in displacement of thousands of poor families and their relocation in far-off suburbs. This new 'enclave urbanism' (considered as 'neo-liberal apartheid') is being facilitated through reassembling (and grabbing) lands by the 'building broomers' (Utrecht University 2009).

For understanding the above process, this paper is inspired by David Harvey's famous essay 'The Right to the City' (2008). For Harvey, such mega transformation, which is spread from Shanghai to Seoul or Delhi to Mumbai, is taking shape through

> a process of displacement or accumulation by dispossession at the core of urbanisation under capitalism. It is the mirror image of capital absorption through urban redevelopment, and is giving rise to numerous conflicts over the capture of valuable land from low-income populations that may have lived there for many years (*ibid.*: 34).

Elaborating on this crucial process, Harvey makes a few important propositions, which are summarised below:

(a) The perpetual need to find profitable terrains for capital – surplus production and absorption – shapes the politics of capitalism. Urbanisation has played an active role in absorbing the surplus product that capitalists perpetually produce for profits.

(b) In the United States of America it is accepted wisdom that the housing sector was an important stabiliser of economy. [In the context of Mumbai, it has proved to be a booster to stagnant business and manufacturing since the 1980s.]

(c) The urban process has undergone another transformation of scale. It has, in short, gone global to the extent that China has taken in nearly half the world's cement supplies since 2000 – again all debt-financed. Such processes are transforming the landscape.

(d) This more radical expansion of the urban process has brought with it incredible transformations of lifestyle. Quality of urban life has become a commodity, as has the city itself, in a world where consumerism, tourism, and cultural and knowledge-based industries have become major aspects of the urban political economy.

(e) We increasingly live in divided and conflict-prone areas. The results are indelibly etched on the spatial forms of our cities, which increasingly consist of fortified fragments, gated communities and privatised public spaces kept under constant surveillance.

(f) Surplus absorption through urban transformation has a darker aspect. It has entailed repeated bouts of urban restructuring through 'creative destruction', which nearly always has a class dimension, since it is the

poor, the unprivileged, and those marginalised from political power that suffer first and foremost from this process.

(g) The right to the city, as it is now constituted, is too narrowly confined, restricted in most cases to a small political and economic elite that is in a position to shape cities more and more after its own desires.

In recalling Harvey's above observations on the mega transformation of cities across the globe, it is not proposed to re-orient this paper to validate their relevance. However, the discussion on mega transformation (or restructuring) of Mumbai – the major thrust of the present paper – takes clues from Harvey's observations while unfolding the happenings in the city during the last 15 years, coinciding with the 'structural adjustment' of Indian economy for opening it to the global business and trade.

It needs to be emphasised that the exercise here is not about understanding the morphology of rapidly changing cities in India or forms of enclave urbanism as its consequence. Rather, our perspective is based on the argument of a few leading researchers in the field (Castells 1998; Sassen 2000; Harvey 2008) that such an urbanisation under global forces essentially relates to capitalist formations, which are dividing city dwellers into great 'consumers', living in gated neighbourhoods and separated from the unprivileged 'others', whose rights to the city are denied or infringed upon.

The Indian City:
Segregation into Ethnic or Class-based Communities

The dominant Hindu culture of Indian society traditionally presented a form of caste-based segregation of communities living in villages or bazaar towns. Even a few historically strategic cities which emerged as capitals of dynastic rulers, trade centres, or religious (pilgrimage) cities, showed such spatial segregation of communities where the privileged lived closer to the central city activity, and the serving communities lived away at the peripheries. Highly discriminatory living patterns emerged in villages and towns where the so-called 'polluting castes' were not allowed to even own properties, and lived in substandard houses at the periphery of settlements. Even the direction of wind (for most part of the year) decided the location of houses of the outcastes such that it does not blow through their houses towards those of the higher castes (Ghurye 1961). An excellent introduction to emerging spatial patterns and forms of historical cities in India is presented in M.S.A. Rao *et al.* (1991). As stated by Jay Weinstein,

> The existing ecological structure of Indian cities is the outcome of
> various historical events and the culture of people. Local cultural
> views, ethnical caste loyalties, traditional segregation principles,
> particularistic canons of neighbourhood desirability, and norms of
> intensive land use appear to be among the most prominent subjective
> elements influencing ecological structure in Indian cities (quoted in
> M.S.A. Rao 1991: 83-84).

J.E. Brush described the preferences for central location in pre-modern
(Indian) cities in the three words: protection, prestige, and proximity
(cited in *ibid.*: 87). Further, presenting an analysis of the socio-economic
structure of Bombay and Delhi, Brush observed that the inner part of
these cities housed the high status population, while the people of low
rank lived away from the city centre. However, the extensions which
were coming up in a sectoral fashion in outer zones had the residential
colonies of the new elite.

The British colonisers made limited intervention in a few strategic
cities of India which were used by them as the trade centres, railway
colonies, or for stationing their troops. They introduced another spatial
segregation in these cities by establishing well-serviced and spacious
settlements adjacent to the old city. This way, civil lines, cantonments,
and railway colonies emerged as 'Englistan' in contrast to the existing
city (the 'Hindustan') (Noble and Dutt 1977). Incidentally, the evolution
of Mumbai as a key seaport and business centre owes a great deal to the
British colonisers.

According to Meera Kosambi, the British town of Bombay had
'Bombay Castle' as its nucleus:

> The broad divisions of the Town were the southern section occupied by
> European merchants, and the northern section occupied by Indian
> merchants.... Further developments in the second half of the nineteenth
> century were the growth of industry, almost surrounding the Native Town
> in a semi-circle belt, and accompanied by new working class residential
> areas; the extensive development of the docks; and the continuation of the
> European commercial residential area into Lower Colaba (former Old
> Woman's Island) (1991: 160).

She further observes: 'Overall, Bombay's population was extremely
diverse, and its spatial pattern was based on the centrality of commerce
and a strict segregation of Indian ethnic areas' (*ibid.*). A vivid description
of settling down of various migrant communities in Mumbai along the
lines of their caste, regional, or religious affiliations is given by Heinz
Nissel (cited in Patel 2006: 255, fn 9).

This brief ecological profile of Indian cities, including that of Mumbai, brings out the fact that people tend to live in neighbourhoods of their 'own' people – with common caste, religious, or regional origins. These neighbourhoods are further differentiated in terms of economic status of various sections of population. Rigid cultural values, associated with Indian caste society, also produced abrasive spatial segregations which kept the 'outcastes' at periphery of human settlements. History tells us that the privileged always had 'first' right to city, whether legitimate or not. If that be so, in what way the enclave urbanism witnessed under the present mega transformation of a few leading Indian cities becomes problematic? In a polity which claims to be in pursuit of democratic values and social justice there is no justification for such unequal spatial segregations of people and communities. More so, in Mumbai, glancing through its role in creation of wealth, its darker side and dehumanising effects, under the present market-driven destruction and reconstruction, become questionable. Here, the observations of Harvey find their relevance.

Role of the Poor in the Creation of Wealth in Mumbai

The history of the creation of wealth in Mumbai has essentially been a product of investment by merchant-capitalists, professional expertise, and abundant cheap labour of migrants from within the region or from far-off areas. The handling of cargo by its seaport, competitive textile industry, and finance and trade set the tone for such a development. The surplus capital generated was partly reinvested in chemical and allied industries, and the rest mainly diverted to fixed assets like real estate and gold trade or converted into the black money. The creation of wealth thus led to the darker side of development, manifesting in unethical business and the emergence of the underworld. The unskilled or skilled migrant workers were poorly paid and settled either in dingy dwellings provided by the employers or in slum structures through informal means (mainly with the help of slumlords). The dockworkers tended to erect their huts close to the port area. In the central part of the city, where several textile mills emerged, the migrant workers either stayed in the extended *ahatas* (corridors) of mill boundaries or in nearby areas. In the 1920s, the city municipality constructed one-room *pucca chawl*s through the then Bombay Development Department (BDD). These three-storied structures (with over 60 *chawl*-rooms each) emerged in Worli, Deslile Road, and Girangaon, and are now well known as the BDD-Chawls. All these are presently in dilapidated condition, and being strategically located, they are becoming a part of 'restructuring' under the mega transformation of

the city. The pace of migration of rural poor to the city increased manifold in the 1970s and onwards, with the result of proliferation of slum settlements all around. These slums were sandwiched between the commercial areas and regular housing settlements of the middle and upper classes. Such a mixed use of landscape of the city became symbolic of the chimneys, ware-houses, and godowns integrated with the housing clusters of various classes of population (Shaban 2008). Such intermix of land use resulted in high-density population in several parts of the old city.

Neera Adarkar describes the living culture of textile-worker communities located in Girangaon area thus:

> Girangaon was the home for most of the textile workers and it soon developed into a closely knit neighbourhood. The mixed zoning of Girangaon which evolved over a century led to an integrated and sustainable development. The balance between livelihoods, housing, environment, social and cultural institutions, active political participation, all imparted a unique quality of life to this working class district (2008: 136).

Coming back to the role of poor of Mumbai in creation of wealth in the city, one needs to recall the names of these unskilled and semi-skilled workers, in their job positions, whose hard labour created wealth through textiles, sea-port trade and other forms of business activities. Terms like *morpatiya, tandel, mathadi, julaha*, and *rangrej* are now forgotten names of the workers who brought prosperity to the city. Such a joint role of the poor and affluent classes in shaping Mumbai into a rich and cosmopolitan culture is well portrayed by Gyan Prakash (2008).

The above scenario well illustrates the multi-identity of various interest-groups and their 'right to the city', derived through their roles in contributing to the city's economy and its pluralistic community. This way, in the earlier decades of India's economic growth since its Independence, Mumbai played a key role and was termed as the financial capital of India. Till the 1980s, the city remained a leading contributor to the national income. It paid one-third of the country's income tax, 60 per cent of the customs duties, and 20 per cent of the central excise tax. It generated 10 per cent of the country's industrial jobs. Mumbai's port handled almost half of the country's maritime trade, and airport handled 58 per cent and 41 per cent of international and national air passenger traffic in the country respectively. The off-shore oil and gas fields of Bombay High produced almost 61 per cent and 48 per cent respectively of the country's total petroleum products, most of which were handled

and served from Mumbai. The city's oil-refining output accounted for 23 per cent of the country's total output (Patankar 1996).
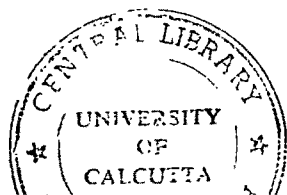
Almost a similar growth profile of Mumbai's economy, in the 1990s, is portrayed by N. Harris, with the addition that

> the city's banks controlled 12 per cent of national deposits and a quarter of the country's outstanding credits. The number of new issues listed on the Bombay's stock exchange grew from 203 in 1991-92 to 694 in 1993-94, and the amount of fresh capital in old and new companies increased from Rs 54 bn to Rs 213 bn between these years' (quoted in Patel 2006: 264).

The hidden fact missing in such a growth profile of Mumbai is that, by this period (1993-94), its textile manufacturing base had collapsed and there was flight of manufacturing capital (in other sectors) away from Mumbai – towards Vapi, Surat, Ahmedabad, and Pune. This declining phase, which began in the 1980s itself, is relevant to recall here as it corresponds to the stagnation of the city, its aging housing stock, growing housing poverty, collapsing infrastructure, and rapid growth of the informal sector.

Militant Unionism, Crisis of Textile and Other Industries and Rapid Decline of Mumbai's Quality of Life

The 1980s witnessed a rapid population growth in the city, mainly through inflow of migrants from rural areas. This resulted in mushrooming growth of slum settlements in the city and a supportive informal sector. The strong labour movement in the organised sector, though under peripheral industrial economy, led to labour unrest with frequent strikes, lays offs, and even shut-down of industrial units. This labour movement mainly grew under the banner of leftist ideology and became an eyesore to the Congress party, which was then ruling the state and also the central government. In order to reduce the influence of leftist unions, the Congress encouraged communal forces, then trying to raise their strength. This brought immense clout to the Shiv Sena – a pro-nativist movement which also spread anti-Muslim sentiments in the city. Since then the Shiv Sena has become a formidable political force in the city. During the communal riots in the city, in 1992-93, its public space was ethnicised and communalised. The public spaces, consequently, became spaces of 'fear' for the marginalised. The Shiv Sena and other 'Hindutva' groups have ceaselessly innovated methods for 'othering' people and precipitating violence (Shaban 2008).

Another militant union leader, Datta Samant, who emerged on the scene, further harmed the already stagnant and labour-unrest-ridden manufacturing industry. A showdown between the industrialists of Mumbai and the workers' unions became inevitable. It came through the historic textile workers' strike of 1982-83, which changed the city's landscape in a significant way (see D'Monte 2002). The strike lasted for some 18 months. About 250,000 directly or indirectly employed textile workers lost their jobs due to partial or total closure of over fifty textile mills in the city. Several sick mills were nationalised and taken over by the National Textile Corporation, but remained 'sick' for years to come. The situation in the main manufacturing hub of city, the Thane-Belapur industrial belt, was no better. Many pharmaceutical, chemical, and engineering units were plagued due to the labour unrest, stagnation, declining profits, and increasing overhead costs. Several units were closed down or shifted their locations to other regions, like Vapi, Surat, and Pune.

Such a state of affairs led to rapid growth of informal sector in the city. Several of the textile workers who lost their jobs became hawkers. Some of their youths even joined criminal gangs (Adarkar 2008). According to an estimate (Harris cited in Patel 2006: 265), in 1976, 27 per cent of the city's organised workforce found employment in the textile industry; by 1991, the figure was down to 12 per cent. Likewise, according to another estimate (computed from Employment Market Information) there was an increase in the workers of the informal sector from 49 per cent in 1961 to 65.5 per cent in 1991 (*ibid.*: 266).

Growing Housing Poverty and Dual Response of Government

The setback to industrial growth and rapid increase of the unemployed or underemployed humanpower due to the decline of organised industry, gave a big jolt to economic viability of the city. The rapidly growing number of slum dwellers (see Table 1) and their survival economy became an eyesore to the planners and the privileged classes. The infrastructure was crumbling and the economy became stagnant. This led to overriding policies by political parties towards tackling the growth of slums and housing poverty of people, then constituting over 40 per cent of the total population. Large-scale evictions of slum dwellers and some rehabilitation schemes became the logical and conflicting approach towards the city's poor. However, their growing number and the alienation of the upper classes from corrupt and power-hungry political leaders led to the importance of city-poor as the main vote bank. As a populist measure, the then ruling Congress party revised the Development

· **Table 1: Population Growth and the Share of Slum Population
of Greater Mumbai**

Year	Total population (in millions)	Slum Population
1951	2.97	. –
1961	4.15	0.50 .
1968	–	1.00
1971	5.97	–
1976	–	3.25
1981	8.24	4.20
1991	9.90	–
2001	11.91	6.25

Source: Adapted from Sharma (2006: 285).

Control Rules in 1991, for providing houses to the millions poor through a cross-subsidised scheme by bringing the private builders on the scene. This gave incentive to the builders through extra FSI (floor space index) in exchange for providing a small *pucca* dwelling to the poor at a highly subsidised cost. Meanwhile, given the interlocking of open lands due to the Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act, the creation of new housing stock in the city fell far short of the demand. This made the private builder important as an agent of urban renewal, on the one hand, and resulted in a steep hike in the rates of housing and commercial properties, on the other.

In order to neutralise the subsidised housing scheme of the Congress, the opposition Shiv Sena gave boost to the populist slum housing scheme, by involving the private builders for creating 'one million' free houses to the poor. The 'transferable development rights' was introduced for creation of such housing stock away from the central parts of the city (see Nainan 2008). The issue of reconstructing over 20,000 'old and dilapidating buildings' also created lot of pressure on government for opening up the urban renewal of Mumbai to private developers. Though nothing much was achieved over a decade (1991-2000) in providing formal houses to the millions of poor, it created a favourable environment for a big role for private developers in reconstructing the city in the coming years (see Sharma 2006).

The Housing Market in Mumbai:
Haven for the Builder Mafia and Speculators

It is significant to note that even prior to the mega transformation of Mumbai during the last 10 years or so, the city and its spaces became an open field for profiteering and speculation by land sharks and the builder

mafia. For decades, the wealth (more so the black money) created by the merchant-capitalists fuelled this process. It distorted the land and housing market in the city, making it impossible for an 'average-income' family (leave aside the millions of slum dwellers) to have access to land or a formal house (*ibid.*). Particularly, since the 1980s, even the suburbs and extended suburbs of the city experienced a real-estate boom that converted the most essential human service – housing – into a commodity in the market for profiteering and speculation. The low pace of creation of new housing stock due to red-tape and inter-locking of open lands under the Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act compounded the housing shortage. It is also true that, at any point of time in the city, 25 to 30 per cent of the newly created housing stock remained vacant for speculation and profiteering. According to an estimate, the annual increase in land and housing prices in the central city between 1975 and 2000 had been between 50 to 150 per cent, though the 'general price index' for the same period grew only between 10 and 12 per cent per annum. Even in suburban areas of the metropolis, housing prices in the above 25-year period increased ten-fold (*ibid.*: 290-91). According to another estimate, 'between 1966 and 1998, the real-estate (land) prices in Mumbai increased by 720 per cent. There have been similar booms in mid-1990s and around 2004-07, which have seen price appreciations in the range of 300 per cent' (TISS 2009). According to yet another assessment, 'Mumbai has a turn over, profit and property values amongst the highest in the world. Boom in the construction industry and real estate sector was pegged at Rs 720 bn in 2006-07, and is likely to reach Rs 2,700 bn by 2010' (Das 2009).

There is a further darker side to this real estate and building construction activity in the city. Since decades, it has been interwoven with the criminal elements. In fact, several criminal dons in the city are actively involved in real estate and building activity (Sharma 2007: 292). In this regard, the former Police Commissioner of Mumbai, M.N. Singh, observed, 'More and more gang members are becoming builders [names not disclosed here].... Property deals have become the major cause of most gang killings in the recent times. Between 1991 and 1994, fourteen such murders occurred which included mainly businessmen and even a few politicians' (1994: 29). He further stated: 'There is a loose nexus between the builders, real estate agents and the under-world gangs.... The city runs the risk of being over-taken by the mafia gangs unless this nexus is broken' (*ibid.*: 153).

Given the above processes in the evolution of the city's economy and their impact on majority of the poor citizens, 'the right to the city', as discussed by Harvey (2008), had already eroded for an ordinary citizen

of Mumbai. The decline of productive activity in the city, growing housing poverty, and vested interests taking over the charge of 're-building' the city have all contributed to this.

Imagining Mumbai as 'World-Class City': Influencing Mind-set of Citizens

At the time of 'opening up' of Indian economy to global markets (in 1991-92), Mumbai showed symptoms of a declining megapolis for reasons like (a) over-burdened land-use due to population explosion (due to large in-migration and natural growth), (b) crumbling infrastructure (c) aging housing stock in the main city, (d) over 45 per cent of the population living in dehumanised conditions in over 2,000 slum settlements, (e) depleting public resources for any significant improvement, (f) social housing schemes of government departments marred by scarcity of land for mass housing and inefficient and corrupt practices, (g) virtual seize of the city by the builder mafia and land sharks, and above all (h) the decline in manufacturing activity and rapidly growing informal economy in the city.

The '20-Year Plan' for the city formulated by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) reflected such inadequacies and contractions. For instance, the Regional Plan for Bombay Metropolitan Region, 1973 viewed the burgeoning population as the root cause of Greater Bombay's problems. Accordingly, it recommended strong measures to arrest further growth in the city by imposing ban on new industries in the region (MMRDA 1995: 12). However, the Draft Regional Plan for the Mumbai Metropolitan Region for 1996-2011 (*ibid.*) reversed its perspective about the growth of Mumbai city and its region. It set the new agenda for 'transforming' the city for its global role through active participation of the private sector (as per the economic reforms), by significantly altering the existing rules (for land-use plan), and bringing the huge spaces of closed textile mills, warehouses, and godowns for such a transformation. In recommending this, the plan did emphasise the need for an 'equity' approach in various development processes and their benefits.

Such significant recommendations were hardly taken seriously by citizens concerned, academia, or social activists, as they never saw, in the past, recommendations of the '20-Year Plan' for the city being implemented due to lack of resources and absence of proper vision for the city among the policy makers, more so the politicians. However, the citizens and civil society groups were taken by surprise when these broader guidelines of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Plan were

reinforced for the mega transformation of Mumbai through a document – 'Vision Mumbai: Transforming Mumbai into a World-Class City' (2003) – prepared by McKinsey Consultants on behalf of an elite NGO of Mumbai, 'The Bombay First'. The strategy for such a mega transformation, at the cost of Rs 1,800 bn and in ten-year period, was spelt out thus:

> To become a vibrant international metropolis, Mumbai must ensure that its economic growth is comparable to world-class levels while simultaneously upgrading the quality of life it provides to its citizens. At present it is slipping up on both dimensions. If it wants to achieve this status, the Government and the citizens need to undergo a change in mind-set rather than continuing to think incrementally. Specifically, Mumbai must invest $ 40 billion (of which a fourth will come from public sources), over the next ten years, towards effecting this steep change. Several cities (e.g., Cleveland, Shanghai) have eminently been successful in achieving this transformation and our analysis suggests that if Mumbai were to follow the multi-pronged programme, it too will be well on its way (The Bombay First 2003: Executive Summary).

This document was given wide publicity through the media and a few talks/seminars. By this time, the process of urban renewal in the city had already set in. The availability of huge space (about 585 acres of land) in the central part of city, due to the closer of several textile mills, paved the way for a possible transformation of the city. In 1991, the Government of Maharashtra legislated under the Development Control Regulation 58, allowing the closure of industries and change in the land-use – from industrial to commercial/residential. The main contention of the government for allowing use of the mill lands for commercial/residential purposes was to repay the debts taken by mill owners from financial institutions, clearing the wage arrears (and other payments) to the workers, providing resettlement to the stranded workers, and allowing part of the mill spaces for the benefit of owners of the mills. However, several social activists, professional planners, and academicians questioned the move of government for such a cause which, for them, aimed at opening up the lands to builder mafia (and other vested interests) in order to make huge profits from such a haphazard growth.

Coming back to the 'Vision Mumbai' document, within a few months of floating this idea by an elite NGO of the city, surprisingly, messages started emerging from the government departments, senior bureaucrats, and political leaders favouring such a 'reconstruction' of the city. The government showed its seriousness for such a change and formed a high-level Task Force to examine the feasibility of suggested

mega projects under the 'Vision Mumbai' document. Thus, the government, in principle, accepted the need for mega transformation of the city and tried to mould the mindset of public for such a change. Seminars were held on this 'win-win situation'.

Mega Projects for 'Reconstruction' of Mumbai

For the 'reconstruction' of Mumbai, the government conceived several mega projects. The Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP), much needed for improving road/rail transport system, was initiated at a cost of Rs 45 bn, half of which had to be in the form of loan from the World Bank. With the widening existing roads or laying of new ones, several flyovers were constructed, mainly for the rapid movement of private cars. The Bandra-Worli Sea-face Expressway was planned and implemented in 2001 (completed in 2009), which, in the second phase, would be extended to the far end of Nariman Point via the Peddar Road. Its original cost of Rs 13 bn increased by over a half due to long delays. The new road is expected to carry over 100,000 cars a day. There is no likelihood of plying trucks or common-man's vehicles (like two-wheelers, or auto-rickshaws) on this Expressway.

Another mega project, the Super-Express Highway between Mumbai and Pune (a distance over 100 km) was taken up at a cost of Rs 9 bn. It was expected to carry over 70,000 vehicles a day. Two other mega projects underway are a new airport in Navi Mumbai and a 22-km floating road on the sea – connecting Shewri (Central City) to Nava Shiva (Navi Mumbai) – at a cost of over Rs 90 bn. Around five 'special economic zones' are planned (some under execution, others not being allowed due to stiff public resistance) which envisage huge investment. And recently, work on underground metro-train project linking – Varsova, Andheri, Ghatkopar, and Makhurd – has begun. It is estimated to cost over Rs 203 bn.

Other than these infrastructure projects, the government has, since over 15 years, planned and executed slum resettlement schemes in various parts of the city with the help of private builders under the 'cross-subsidy' arrangements. The Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA) is the sole authority for executing these schemes. Not very satisfied with the slow progress of SRA in implementing slum resettlement schemes, the government has proposed a 'model' reconstruction project for 'cluster redevelopment' of the largest (in Asia) slum settlement, Dharavi, through international help in planning and execution of the project. It would involve a cost over Rs 90 bn (Harvey 2008: 35). The government has also executed the Bandra-Kurla commercial hub through its apex

planning body, MMRDA. The idea is to sell commercial lands to private developers for creating a parallel central business district to the existing one in the extreme south (that is, Nariman Point-Fort commercial area). This has turned MMRDA more into a real estate developer (for bringing sizeable income to the exchequer). In this context, another public development authority in Navi Mumbai, the City and Industrial Development Corporation, now competes in the real estate market, instead of contributing to social housing and creating jobs there.

These mega projects are taken up by the government mainly through debt-financing or in partnership with the private sector. These are in addition to the urban renewal projects being implemented by private developers in various parts of the city and in far suburban areas. These mainly focus on strategic spaces, which are being used for constructing posh commercial structures, skyscrapers for luxury housing, shopping malls and plazas, hotels, recreation centres, and so on. The much discussed mill lands are being transformed into such pro-rich enclaves. The high-rise luxury towers like Phoenix Towers, Kalpataru Towers, Belvedre Court, and Tower of Matulya have emerged within the boundaries of the closed mills. So are the recreation centres, swimming pools, and tennis courts. These well-guarded and gated residential/ commercial structures exist on lands that once were the source of livelihood for thousands of mill workers.

This enclave development for the elite class is taking shape not only in parts of the main city but also in suburbs and extended suburbs. Many poor localities, where the privileged class would not even like to enter, are being demolished and reconstructed for luxury housing, shopping malls, hotels, and commercial structures. The city's landscape is changing rapidly, beyond anybody's comprehension a few years back. Who are the winners in this transformation, and who are the losers? The next section tries to examine such issues as 'the right to the city', equity, sustainability, and cost of such a transformation – not only for the citizens of Mumbai, but also for a country like India, where issues like hunger, food security, and meeting basic needs are alive and pressing.

Mega Transformation of Cities: A Critique

It is a well-known fact all over the world that a few cities have been in control and command of the creation and use of capital. These cities are in an advantageous position in terms of their quality of life, consumer culture, and economic viability. In fact, they rule their regions and their economies. It is also a historical truth that people tend to migrate from deprivation to prosperity, even if such movements are restricted by

physical, legal, or national boundaries. Therefore, the growth of mega cities is inevitable and so is the need for their modernisation. Infusion of surplus capital for their deconstruction/reconstruction should then be seen as indispensable. It is equally imperative that those in privileged positions shall tend to live in gated and well-serviced settlements. The need of 'gentrification' in European cities after World War II was a part of such enclave urbanism which gave new forms and identities to several cities.

Mumbai, despite generating huge wealth, remained neglected in terms of its needs for infrastructure and infusion of capital for mass housing, and because of ad hoc mobilisation of resources for a comprehensive planning. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Plan (1996-2011) needed annually Rs 15 bn for keeping its services at bare minimum by implementing projects for augmenting water supply, sewerage disposal, improving transport, and maintaining public spaces. Even this amount was not available with the public exchequer.

In the above context, one could consider the criticism of mega transformation of cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore as 'regressive' and over-reaction to a process of change for their economic viability. These cities, being abodes of the wealthy as well as the squalor need to go through drastic changes for a better future for their citizens, and even beyond.

In contrast to the above view, it is our main contention that the mega transformation of cities like Mumbai and Delhi has led to widespread privileges and deprivations across their populations. Moreover, the change has turned the privileged citizens into consumers of high lifestyles and standards at the cost of the deprived millions. A critical evaluation of this scenario is presented in this section.

Urban Renewal: An Agenda for Speculation, and Profiteering

The main criticism of urban renewal presently witnessed in Mumbai or Delhi is that it has turned spaces into a force of production where a few hundred land sharks and builders have virtually seized these cities. Their greed for super-profits has corrupted the political and administrative system to its core. These builders of the luxury houses, shopping malls, hotels, and commercial hubs are dispossessing the poor and capturing valuable lands from low-income populations. According to Harvey (2008), in China, millions are being dispossessed of the spaces they have long occupied, three million in Beijing alone. He also cites the cases of builder mafia of Seoul City who forced poor people out of their homes for grabbing lands for high-price building activity. In Mumbai, it is now

happening every day. Numerous cases are reported or filed in the courts of law by occupants of *chawl*s, old and dilapidated buildings, and slum shanties against the grabbing of their properties by unscrupulous land-developers and builders. This situation is not unique to Mumbai. Delhi presents an even darker side when it comes to the right of poor to the city; there the poor are getting displaced for mega transformation without any significant resettlement schemes (Baviskar 2006; Soni 2006; Dupont 2008; Ghertner 2008). Harvey (2008) calls this process 'accumulation by dispossession'.

Eroding Affordability in Housing Market

In this kind of development, where the housing prices show an annual increase of 30 to 50 per cent, the affordability of even the middle-class people to own a small house gets eroded. One can imagine the fate of over a half of the people in Mumbai who live in slum-shanties and have no stake in such speculative market. Ironically, public housing agencies like Maharashtra Housing and Area Development Authority and City and Industrial Development Corporation (in Navi Mumbai) have drastically reduced social housing schemes meant for the disadvantaged sections. These agencies instead are competing with the real-estate market for reaping bonanza from this runaway boom. The City and Industrial Development Corporation, which acquired lands from farmers in Navi Mumbai at the negligible price of Rs 0.5 to 2 per sq. ft, is now auctioning the same land (developed) to private builders at Rs 700 to 2,500 per sq. ft. It is, therefore, not surprising that, even in distant areas like Navi Mumbai, no houses are available below the price of Rs 1 mn. Who then benefits from this mega transformation? This all is happening in a housing market in Mumbai where over 100,000 newly constructed houses are estimated to be available at any time for speculation (TISS 2009).

Such is the state of affairs in a speculative housing market, which has turned a basic human need into a commodity beyond the reach of a majority of residents in these mega cities. It would be absurd to say that housing shortage may be responsible for such a crisis. As stated earlier, 25 to 30 per cent of the newly constructed houses are retained by builders and speculators for profiteering. Their huge black money gives them leverage in retaining these vacant flats for an 'appropriate time'. It can be recalled here that after the Harshad Mehta Stock Exchange Scam in 1992, when Mehta rigged the market and cheated several public banks to the tune of about Rs 40 bn, many operators in the share market

diverted their funds to the real estate and building activity, which pushed the real estate prices beyond any comprehension.

The City Planning Chasing Runaway Development

Another sad part of the present transformation or rather construction boom in the city is that it has violated the basic planning principles. City planning is expected to keep in focus the basic needs of people from various sections of the population. Even while recommending basic changes in land use plan from industrial (spaces) to commercial and residential purposes, the '20-Year Plan' for Mumbai recommended a plan based on equity principle:

> In the context of revision of Regional Plan, increasing the supply of urban serviced land for housing purposes, particularly for the poor, will be of critical importance.... Attempts to redevelop slums through market oriented strategies such as providing higher FSI [floor space index], will have limited application where real estate prices are sufficiently high. Even in such cases, the initiative to opt for redevelopment should be left to the slum-dwellers' cooperatives ... and land tenure should be provided by the way of assembling small land parcels into redevelopable entities (MMRDA 1995: 21-22).

However, the redevelopment of mill lands in 1992-93 changed such priorities. In this respect, the most succinct comment comes from a leading architect of the city, Rahul Mehrotra:

> Planning in contemporary Mumbai is systematically 'posterior' as a recuperative and securing action. ...the government is absolutely incapable of keeping ahead of the physical transformation of Mumbai that they have unleashed....The case of mill lands vividly illustrates this condition of runaway physical growth in Mumbai ... (2008: 392).

> Shrouding the issue in ambiguity, politicians, mill owners and bureaucrats manipulated legislation and essentially deprived the city of a fantastic moment to balance its desperate shortage of affordable housing, open spaces, public amenities and social infrastructure like schools and hospitals.... By default, the private sector ... is determining the emergent form of Mumbai (*ibid.*: 393).

With a shift in planning towards privatising the city development, a familiar pattern is visible — also visible in the mill-lands saga: 'no strategy but instead a series of tactics; quick overnight demolitions of property to make way for new development, global tenders, and the creation of new middle men and power brokers' (*ibid.*: 399).

Another leading planner team in the city expresses its views thus:

> Urban Planning in Mumbai has been systematically dismantled over the
> last few decades by successive [political] regimes in Maharashtra. The
> planners themselves are not clear about the space needed for public uses.
> Hence, when they talk about turning Mumbai into Shanghai, they are only
> considering an increase in the floor space index but not the public areas
> (Patel *et al.* 2008: 206).

The building broomers are least deterred by such resistance from leading
planners and social activists. They keep on hunting new spaces for
multiplying their fortunes. For example, against all environmental
considerations and carrying capacity of the city, there is an all-out effort
by the building broomers to grab salt-pan lands for further development.
Nauzer Barucha reports:

> 'Just 10 Families Control over 3,000 Acres of Salt-Pan-Lands in Mumbai'.
> Mumbai builders have sensed their next big development opportunity on
> vast expanse of salt-pan plots.... Though the state government maintains
> that development on salt-pan land will be only for rehabilitating slum
> dwellers, senior officials have told TOI [*The Times of India*] that some of
> the biggest names in the realty industry are lobbying with the government
> to free up the locked land. If they succeed, it will be their next big victory
> after the Supreme Court verdict that let them develop mill plots (2008:
> 354).

Housing Poverty: The Tool to Reap Rich Bonanza

The above statement further hints at the darker side of mega
transformation of Mumbai, where the pretext of 'housing the millions of
poor of Mumbai' has become a tool in the hands of land sharks and
developers – in connivance with the politicians and bureaucrats, no doubt
– to create wealth for themselves. In this process, a few thousand
families from slums are also getting benefit of resettlement with land-
titles. As stated earlier, since the 1990s, the state government has been
implementing several resettlement schemes for the poor through the
involvement of private builders. It is reported (TISS 2009), that such
resettlement schemes have so far touched only about 3.5 per cent of the
total slum-dwelling population. Without going into details, a few
observations are made here to show that various schemes of resettlement
formulated by SRA, in fact, mainly favour the private developers who
are grabbing prime lands in the city and displacing/resettling poor
families in far away and remote areas. Thus, the Govandi-Mankhurd area
(M/E Ward) in the suburbs has become a key location for resettling the

slum dwellers. A more objective assessment of the SRA schemes is available from an evaluation study conducted by researchers at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences:

> The spread of SRS [Slum Rehabilitation Scheme] with respect to distribution of slum population suggests that SRA Scheme has not reached the areas where a large proportion of slum population exists... Also, in other areas, where it has been implemented to a larger extent, its spread is restricted to pockets where land has a good commercial value. The interior pockets possessing less market demand are left out from the (SRA) scheme (Bhide *et al.*, 2003: 113).

Fraudulent practices, rampant corruption, and criminal intimidation of the poor (who dare speak for their interests) have become synonymous with these schemes meant for housing the poor in Mumbai. A senior architect planner who has been associated with several such schemes (for implementation by the builders) shared his views (in an interview with the author) on various unethical practices in the scheme. According to him, for implementing a scheme, builder/developer has to seek over 50 clearances/NOCs (no-objection certificates) from various government departments. At each stage, the builder has to bribe the officials concerned: on an average, a sum of Rs 150,000 has to be paid as bribes for each slum dwelling. Thus, for a slum settlement (for rehabilitation) consisting of, say, 100 slum dwellings, Rs 15 mn have to be paid as bribes to officials (to be shared with politicians) by the builder. It is, therefore, not surprising that all kinds of frauds have emerged in the process. In this context, the observations of Shailesh Gandhi are revealing:

> The private builders do not have any significant milk of human kindness and are more often driven by vile greed. Hence the scheme has failed to make any significant contribution to the problem of housing for the poor ... as the property prices are skyrocketed in the last few years, the SRA has attracted all the greedy criminals to adopt a variety of ways to exploit this.... With the present SRA schemes, the builders, politicians, officials and mafia have been able to earn fantastic amounts if they can increase the number of fake slum dwellers, take over Public lands by having even one hut there, coercing slum dwellers into acquiescing in their scheme, and so on.... The state is openly implementing the Protection of Corruption Act (2008: 202).

Another dimension of 'tackling this housing poverty' through private developers is the widening inequality between the privileged and the marginalised. This has deepened enclave urbanism in the city, so

effectively portrayed by Vyjanthi Rao, who describes the SRA schemes
turning slum dwellers 'as a form of currency, with their rights to the city
being translated into spatial equivalents that serve as development
instruments' (2008: 59). She further observes:

> In Mumbai, this phase of development is characterized by the segregation
> of populations into two new kinds of developments, the rehabilitation
> colonies on the one hand and new upper and middle class housing
> estates.... Increasingly homogenous communities typify the gated
> residential communities. These new forms of collectivity are characterised
> precisely by the privilege, on the part of the elites, to block the capacities
> inherent within city life of diverse actors, spaces, things and activities to
> interact... (*ibid.*).

This manipulative approach by government to tackle housing poverty
can be contrasted against a humane and successful resettlement (and
rehabilitation) project under MUTP, which provided proper entitlements
and secured houses to over 20,000 families affected due to this infra-
structure project in Mumbai (TISS 2008). There, the World Bank – a
funding partner of MUTP – ensured a participatory and transparent
process of resettlement (and even rehabilitation) of the affected families.

Mega Transformation of Mumbai:
Widening Inequalities and Deprivation

The saga of 'reconstruction' of a few economically strategic cities in
India, under the global agenda and neo-liberalism, amply demonstrates
the relevance of Harvey's observations on political economy of
urbanisation which is transforming several Asian cities for giving a boost
to capitalist formations and absorbing national or transnational surplus
capital for greener pastures (2008). This radical transformation has
brought with it new lifestyles and consumerism for the neo-rich and
privileged sections of city populations. This new enclave-urbanism has
given new forms for spatial use, 'which increasingly consist of fortified
fragments, gated communities and privatised public spaces kept under
constant surveillance' (*ibid.*: 32). Such a process has a darker aspect: it is
'creative destruction' for the unprivileged urban poor, as it entails
'accumulation by dispossession'; it infringes on the 'rights of the poor to
the city'. The present paper, focusing on the mega transformation of
Mumbai, corroborates Harvey's observations. The much darker side of
this process in Mumbai relates to the central role of land sharks and
builder mafia who have corrupted the bureaucrats and politicians to the
core, and used all unethical means and tricks in pursuit of super profits.

Ironically, these agents of change have used the vulnerability (housing poverty) of millions of the poor families as an instrument for achieving their goals.

Finally, it is important to understand the implications of such a mega transformation under market-driven economy to urban development in the country in general. As contended elsewhere (see Sharma and Shaban 2006), there has been a distinct over-concentration of economic activity in a few strategic cities in India which, over the years, has resulted in massive influx of migrant populations in search of livelihoods to these cities. The top eight cities of India (Greater Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune, and Ahmedabad), in 2004, though sheltered only 6 per cent of India's total population, accounted for 36 per cent of the total bank deposits, 51.4 per cent of the total bank credits, and 33.3 per cent of the total equity (foreign direct investment) in the country. Formally, the central government has accepted their role in vitalising Indian economy and, therefore, now aims at transforming major growth-oriented cities, for their global role, through infusing huge funds for such a transformation. Through the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission, launched in December 2005, about Rs 1,215 bn are to be spent on some sixty-five metropolitan cities in the next 7 to 10 years. No doubt, most of these cities face crumbling infrastructure, poor quality of life, and lack of potential for mobilising internal funds for making these cities liveable. However, there are more than 4,000 cities and towns in the country. Except these few chosen 'growth engines', the rest are left to their own fate. No serious attempt was ever made by policy makers for dispersal of economic activity and over-population from these growth-engines to other cities and towns (*ibid.*: 23-25).

Thus, there is a tendency towards 'metropolisation of Indian economy' resulting in islands of prosperity against wide deprivation and disparities all around (see Banerjee-Guha 2009). In fact, there is lot of excitement among the builders and professional consultants that, in next 10 to 15 years, Delhi and Mumbai will harbour populations of the order of 20 to 25 millions each, with bright prospects for their business. The present thrust of transforming India, through the market-driven growth paradigm, has unleashed forces of development which believe in 'runaway' growth for super-profits. Such an opportunistic development is co-opting the state as a 'development agent'. As observed by Harvey, 'the clear distinction that once existed between the urban and the rural is gradually fading into a set of porous spaces of uneven geographical development, under hegemonistic command of the capital and the state' (2008: 36). One may, therefore, expect that, in future, India would

experience more conflict of interests between a few prosperous mega cities and the vast regions of deprivation and impoverishment.

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Civil Society Organisation Partnerships in Urban Governance: An Appraisal of the Mumbai Experience

Binti Singh and D. Parthasarathy

This paper reviews the role of civil society organisation partnerships in urban governance through an analysis of the Advanced Locality Management groups and the NGO Council in Mumbai. The exclusive and restrictive nature of these partnerships with the municipal corporation are brought out by highlighting their non-representative nature, class character, and a particularised vision about the city by which a large section of citizens falls in the category of 'illegality'. Instead of strengthening existing decentralised institutions (like the ward committees), their efforts are directed towards bypassing them and the elected representatives and creating high profile networks with the executive wing of the municipal corporation. The partnerships treat issues from a managerial perspective and ignore the importance of the 'illegal' populace who are inextricably tied to the political economy of the mega city.

[Keywords: Advanced Locality Management groups; civil society organisations; Mumbai; NGO Council; urban governance]

This study is a critical analysis of civil society organisation (CSO) partnerships in urban governance with case studies from Mumbai. It includes those CSOs that seek to work as partners with the urban local body (ULB), namely, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) in addressing urban civic (open space, beautification, green spaces, locality management, encroachments, and hawkers) and governance (transparency, accountability, and efficiency) issues. The Advanced Locality Management (ALM) groups and the NGO Council are instances of the current rhetoric of CSO partnerships with ULBs as

preferred models of urban governance. In addition, the work of NGOs like Loksatta, Nagriksatta Association of Ward Number 63, Association for Good Governance and Networking in India, and citizen initiatives like Citizens' Roundtable (a new avatar of the Mumbai Task Force) and the Road Committee) have been collated to explore the following questions: (a) In an urban context, wherein economic and political powers are unequally distributed, what are the implications of greater involvement of CSOs in urban governance for different social groups (namely, the urban poor[1] in the slums and street vendors? (b) To what extent and in what ways are civic needs and expectations of different sections of the population met by the new arrangements? (c) Does urban governance become more participatory or is it captured by the elites? The analysis presented here is exploratory, using ethnographic research methods, namely, observation and case study. Reports, minutes of meetings, newsletters of the organisations, and newspaper and web articles served as sources of secondary data.

The CSO-ULB partnerships were stressed in the Preamble of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between MCGM and the NGO Council in 2005. The Memorandum stated that the challenges before city governance in Mumbai had grown enormously, both in quantum and complexity, in the past few decades and these could not be overcome without significantly broad basing, deepening, and institutionalising the partnership between MCGM and NGOs/CSOs (www.karmayog.com). Emphasising the importance of CSO-ULB partnerships, the Convener of the NGO Council explained,

> The usefulness of CSOs was especially manifest when they worked in partnership with local governments such as municipal corporations since the latter were the direct democratic interface with the people for the delivery of a wide range of constitutionally mandated civic services and amenities. Our aim is also to connect those people in government who are in a position to improve things, but who are isolated, with ordinary people who, in the course of their everyday lives and experiences, have the desire, intellect, expertise and sensitivity to make contributions of value in the process of policy making (Interview).

Urban Governance and Civil Society Organisations

Civil society was neglected when models of state-led modernisation dominated both the Marxist and liberal conceptions of social change and development. It was recovered in the 1970s and 1980s when state-driven development programmes were questioned. That there has been a steady rise of local and international NGOs working in various domains of

governance such as poverty, environment, citizen participation, and corruption (Baud and De Wit 2008) and that more importance is being given to the role of citizens and their social networks/social capital and CSOs as important players has been well established (Goetz and Gaventa 2001; Cornwall 2002; Crook and Sverrisson 2001; Houtzager *et al.* 2003). The question of how local government works together with other actors in governing their localities has gained importance as well (Pierre and Peters 2000). Urban governance, in turn, has been associated with a particular configuration in which local political authority plays a less central role and much of the coordination and goals are achieved through public-private partnerships. Governance in this context is subsumed under what should be called a specific pro-growth regime (Melo and Baiocchi 2006).

In the globalised scenario, the state is transforming itself and is now in a position to legitimately transfer power or sanction new powers both 'above' it, through agreements between states to establish and abide by norms of international government, and 'below' it, through the constitutional ordering within its own territory in respect of the relationship of power and authority between the levels of government and civil society (Pinto 2008). The term glocalisation (A. Amin cited in *ibid.*) captures this double movement of globalisation, on one hand, and devolution, decentralisation, and localisation, on the other. Localities have become significant sites of action and local strategies are devised to revitalise local structures and to find places for cities in global restructuring (*ibid.:* 39).

O.P. Mathur (cited in Baud and De Wit 2008: 14) defines partnerships as new organisational arrangements that embody a multi-organisational commitment to joint action towards collective public policy goals in which resources are allocated on the basis of normative standards of provision. The two differences with a normal private sector contract are the publicly established normative criteria and the public policy goals embedded in the arrangement. From the 1990s onwards, there has been an upsurge in public-private partnerships, emerging either as a result of policy mandates, as seen in the case of privatisation of services and industries, or as a result of action from below, when voluntary organisations and community-based organisations mobilise around an issue of common concern (Srinivasan 2006).

According to the Constitution of India, urban development is a state subject.[2] The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, commonly known as the Nagarpalika Act, which came into effect on 1 June 1993, enabled urban municipal authorities to derive their existence from the Constitution itself and ushered in a new era of decentralised, empowered

urban local self-government. S. Mohan (2005) notes that this Act allows for (a) the participation of women and the weaker sections of society through the reservation of seats; (b) transfers the responsibility of urban development to the ULBs, in particular of providing urban infrastructure and services as well as mobilising the required financial resources – through taxes, levying users' costs, and by attracting private national and foreign investments; and (c) provides for the formation of ward committees to deal with local issues, that is, committees at the level of municipal constituencies consisting of elected representatives, municipal officers, and representatives from the civil society.

Urban Governance Reforms in Mumbai

The Mumbai mode of urban governance dates back to 1793 and has been replicated all over India. It represents a classic example of complex multi-agency governance and involves many state agencies which provide services essentially local in character. The number of CSOs has also multiplied. Sixteen ward committees were established in Mumbai in 2000 in response to a deadline set by the High Court of Bombay that made ward committees mandatory. N. Nainan and I.S.A. Baud (2008) note that the functions and powers allotted to the ward committees led to changes in power relations between the executive wing headed by the Municipal Commissioner (administration) and the deliberative wing headed by the Mayor (political) in MCGM. As far as participation of CSOs in the constitutionally given space of ward committees is concerned, Nainan and Baud explain that NGOs can be nominated as members of the ward committees to put forward proposals and suggestions but are not permitted to vote; the NGO members are seen more as expert resource persons in special areas. The functions of the ward committees are narrowly defined, so are the potential role of CSOs.

The relationship between NGOs, councillors and ward officers is characterised by conflict and competition. Majority of the councillors, Nainan and Baud report perceived NGOs, particularly those using multiple strategies, advocacy, and representing the elite, as competitors. They preferred those NGOs that had a presence in slums, would work with them in the field and take up issues of the slum population through service delivery. Councillors see ward officers as hurdles to effective client servicing, while the officials view councillors as lacking the necessary education to make proper decisions. NGOs, on the other hand, perceive councillors as political opportunists, corrupt, and even criminals. As councillors select the NGO members, it is likely that they give priority to their friends and allies. In such a situation, most CSOs

prefer not to participate in the ward committee, as it offers only advisory powers on a limited budget. Instead, CSOs prefer to associate themselves with the executive departments for services at the city level and hardly engage with the deliberative wing.

Advance Locality Management Groups and the NGO Council in Mumbai

An ALM is an identified composite area or locality, whose residents and users have committed to improving the quality of life in close co-operation and collaboration with MCGM. An ALM covers a neighbour-hood or street, with about 1,000 citizens; it is registered at the local municipal ward office, which appoints a nodal officer to attend to citizen complaints. The concept was first experimented in 1996 through a pilot project of waste management[3] in the residential colony of Joshi Lane, Ghatkopar East. But before a citizen group is recognised as an ALM, it must begin to segregate domestic garbage into wet and dry. Under Section 368 of the MCGM Act, 1888, segregation of waste is compulsory and this Section empowers MCGM to impose a fine of Rs 1,000 on defaulters. This Act was amended in 2001. Thenceforth MCGM launched a scheme of segregation wet and dry waste to achieve the target of 'zero garbage' in phases all over Mumbai. In this it sought the co-operation of citizens. It made segregation of waste compulsory for all housing societies. An ALM officer looks after solid waste management, roads, and other issues pertaining to maintenance of the locality and coordinates with other officers of MCGM. Some of the active and prominent ALMs located in wards M East and M West, and A, D, K East and West have made themselves visible over the years through the use of the media and other fora. These ALMs get support from MCGM, corporate houses, and NGOs. Corporate houses have extended financial support to ALMs in Chembur and Juhu in various initiatives like eco-friendly immersion of idols and constructing vermin-composting pits. The Orchid group of hotels has instituted the ALM award for best practices in environment. NGOs like the Association for Good Governance and Networking in India and Dignity Foundation support the ALM concept by popularising it among citizens in Mumbai. MCGM supports ALMs by granting them permission for adoption of open spaces and gardens for beautification and providing civic amenities. Regular meetings with the ward officers help bring issues to the fore.

Some ALMs have widened the scope of their activities beyond beautification and cleanliness and have taken up issues like disaster management, and encroachments. Some ALMs are also witnessing

political mobilisation. The ALM groups like the Juhu Citizens Welfare Group have played an active role in the municipal polls in February 2007. This Group lobbied hard in the Vote Mumbai campaign with the state government to carry out systemic reforms in governance before the civic elections in 2007. When the government ignored it, the Group decided to set up a model of good governance by establishing the Nagriksatta Ward 63 Association to experiment the *area sabha* concept (in the Nagar Raj Bill for participatory decentralised governance drafted by the NGO Loksatta) and even succeeded in getting an independent candidate (selected by consensus among NGOs) to successfully fight the municipal polls in 2007.

The NGO Council was formed in 2005 with the NGO Karmayog's initiative and support of sixty-nine large and established NGOs, covering a wide spectrum of issues in Mumbai, to function as a representative body of various non-government, community-based neighbourhood organisations. The NGO Council had taken upon itself to address myriad social issues ranging from public health, street children, and disaster management to civic and governance issues like solid waste management, transport problems, hawkers, public toilets, cleanliness programmes and locality management, youth, education, and corruption. The NGO Council believed in working with the government and, therefore, adopted a partnership model and signed a memorandum of understanding with MCGM in 2005. Some of its success stories include framing of the Municipal Solid Waste (Prohibition of Littering and Regulation of Segregation, Storage, Delivery and Collection) Rules, 2006 and the Charter for the MCGM-Local Area Citizen Group Partnership, 2006 notified with effect from 1 April 2006.

CSO Partnerships in Mumbai: Urban Governance for Whom?

Although ALMs and the NGO Council claimed to represent general interests and common concerns of the citizens of Mumbai, a critical appraisal shows that their partnership with ULB is restrictive and exclusive. Their specific class location makes them problematise urban governance issues in a particularistic way; their characteristic mode of functioning in a managerial-technocratic manner, completely bypassing elected representatives and also ignoring the constitutionally given spaces for CSO participation; their lobbying and advocacy for policy changes exclusively with the executive wing of local government – all render them restrictive and exclusive. In what follows the CSO- ULB partnerships have been examined in terms of their class character, non-representativeness, managerial approach, bypassing ward committees,

bypassing elected representatives, and using lobbying and advocacy as strategies.

Class character: The members of ALMs and the NGO Council mostly belong to the urban, educated, higher-/middle-income groups, and elite sections of the city. The ALMs groups were usually formed by a few residents of the locality through self-selection. They claimed to represent the general interests of the 'law abiding citizens' (implicitly excluding street vendors and hawkers, and slum communities in the concerned area). Middle-class, educated urban citizens claim to possess a repertoire of specialised knowledge, as pointed out in a letter to the Municipal Commissioner by the NGO Council:

> Citizens are a storehouse of practical knowledge, which can serve as extremely valuable inputs for useful specific and generic solutions to the myriad problems facing the city, which MCGM has an obligatory duty to resolve. We would be very keen to be involved in the formulation of policies and procedures, and their implementation, monitoring and feedback in each of the issues envisaged under the Memorandum of Understanding (www.karmayog.org).

Associations with alternative visions like the Ghar Bachao Ghar Banao Andolan, the Feriwala Vikaas Sangathan, and Juhu Moragao Machhimaar Vividh Karyakari Sahyog Sanstha, though equally significant CSO groups voicing issues of urban governance like land, housing, and hawkers, never figured in the membership list of the NGO Council nor were included in subsequent deliberations. They remained conspicuously absent from various meetings and proceedings of the NGO Council. Some NGO members were apprehensive about the goals of the NGO Council from the outset. In one of the first few meetings of the NGO Council with several representatives of NGOs and the Additional Municipal Commissioner, a member remarked,

> We always degenerate to issues of beautification and cleanliness. It is like sweeping the dirt under the carpet. But what about the basic rights of people like housing, water – what is MCGM's policy on water rights? I would like to see the NGO Council take a more strategic look at Mumbai. We need to get back to basics, to make this a meaningful dialogue. We need to look at schools for children. We need to work at different levels: what is MCGM's official position on the rights and entitlements of people; what are the standards of services to be delivered? These issues can emerge from this discussion and a document can be made. I feel that the fundamental issue is slums or housing for the poor. How can this city change this situation of the shortage of space? Affordable housing and the effective use of available space for it must be the No.1 agenda. Everything

else comes back to the slums issue, whether its floods, or cleanliness. There must be a 'decent' use of space; at present 5 per cent of people live in 'decent' housing, and they set the rules for the rest. Of the 227 councillors, 60 per cent themselves live in slums. I have no concrete suggestion or solution, but Apnalaya would like to put its weight behind any initiative to address affordable housing for the poor (Interview).

About the membership of such bodies like the Citizens' Roundtable and Road Committee, nothing is known about the means of selection except that these bodies comprised eminent and celebrity citizens of Mumbai. The Citizens' Roundtable which comprised eminent citizens like retired judges, bureaucrats, and corporate leaders was an initiative to increase peoples' participation in the city's public affairs. It discussed issues like land use, transparency in government plans, public housing, sewerage, roads, and the like. Chaired by a former union cabinet secretary, it comprised two former municipal commissioners, urban experts, and activists, and had built on the work of an NGO, Association for Good Governance and Networking in India, already functioning for several years in Mumbai.

Non-representativeness: One can infer that CSO participation in matters of urban governance flowed out from the efforts of some prominent NGOs and spilled over to form certain splinter groups over the years. The names and composition of later groups may have altered but their fundamental character did not. Since most of these CSO efforts worked in proximity with the government, sometimes even appointed by the latter, one cannot call them representative.

The NGO Council and ALMs did not have any constitutional or legal basis and were not CSOs represented in the ward committees. They had official sanction of ULBs at the ward level and partnered with the executive wing of MCGM, namely, the ward officers in the case of ALMs or, at a higher level, namely, Additional Municipal Commissioner, in the case of the NGO Council. The NGO Council's proximity to MCGM also made it appear as a state-sponsored body, not having a mind of its own. This proximity did not go too well with many of the CSOs that resultantly backed out. Many of the member CSOs thought that they were being co-opted into the establishment, instead of being watchdogs. These differences of opinions had deterred MCGM to collect fines from anyone found spitting, littering, and violating norms of solid waste as mentioned in the Municipal Solid Waste Rules, 2006 that called for greater participation of CSOs in civic governance.

The NGO Council described itself

as a group of organisations which was formed with the initiative and efforts of the NGO Karmayog upon the aftermath of the floods in Mumbai in 2005, to act as a representative body of CSOs and the NGO sector in Mumbai, and comprised a mix of organisations with complementary expertise covering different concerns (www.karmayog.com).

As many as sixty-nine CSO groups were listed as members in the NGO Council. However, the disparate background of its members and the myriad issues that it sought to bring under one umbrella did not really succeed in making it representative. The location of the office of the NGO Council in an elite area of South Mumbai, its conduct of meetings primarily in the English language, and the dissemination of information and official communication through Internet had been responsible in alienating grassroots and community-based CSOs. Many NGOs that initially participated in the proceedings of the NGO Council subsequently got disillusioned. As an erstwhile member of a church-based NGO remarked,

> We were part of the NGO Council when it was formed but slowly the several rounds of meetings covering myriad issues in the MCGM headquarters and the Mantralaya or the Bombay Stock Exchange in south Mumbai were sapping our energies. It is better to work with select groups on specific issues that go with the philosophy of our organisation. That is why we gradually stopped attending the meetings and being part of the NGO Council (Interview).

The differences between existing large NGOs and the newly formed NGO Council increased with time. Initially, prominent NGOs like the Loksatta, Association for Good Governance and Networking in India, and Dignity Foundation supported the idea of an NGO Council. However, when the idea began to take shape – through a memorandum of understanding and subsequent passing of the Cleanliness and Solid Waste Rules, 2006, the Local Area Citizen Group Charter, 2006, several draft policy papers and recommendations to government, and collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Maharashtra – to enable sustained collaborative partnerships between these government agencies and civil society, the big NGOs began to feel threatened and eventually pulled out.

Managerial approach: From the narratives and on-site observations, it can be inferred that the members of CSOs problematised issues from their specific class position in a managerial technocratic manner. When they talked about the city, they visualised it as an abstract space and not as a social space inhabited by real communities of people where borrowed models would simply not work. These communities of people

– for example, service providers like the neighbourhood laundry person, the person selling newspapers or milk in the street corner, the vegetable/fruit vendor, etc. were absent in their abstract maps.

The Citizens' Roundtable provided several recommendations to transform Mumbai into a 'world class city'. The vision of a world class city began with a report on Mumbai's future, called *Vision Mumbai*, by a citizens' group called the Bombay First and the international consulting firm McKinsey and Company. The *Vision Mumbai* report detailed what the city had to do to become a world class city by 2013. Upon receiving the report, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra constituted the Task Force, chaired by the Chief Secretary, to study the proposals and make recommendations (Government of Maharashtra 2004). In a nutshell, the Task Force enlisted subgroups to study six areas of transformation:

> Strategic planning and financing: To become world class Mumbai requires Rs 200,000 crores (40 billion $) investment over 10 years, mostly from the private sector. The Government of Maharashtra must invest over 1500 crore rupees annually, less than one tenth of the total. The Mumbai Development Fund must be created to draw on central government funds and minor levies on Mumbaikars. The city's land assets can be leveraged to boost revenue through Transfer Development Rights etc. (*ibid.*: 9).

> Housing: Slums located in important public locations like airports, parks and railway tracks can be resettled in salt pans and current No Development zones, repeal ULCRA (Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act) which will unlock large tracts of land for residential construction (*ibid.*).

Settlement of slum populations in environmentally fragile lands de-links them from their habitat and livelihood. The purpose of ULCRA was to prevent concentration of urban land among few people and release it for social housing for the poor. However, according to conservative official estimates, in Mumbai alone as much as 44 per cent of open space is under the private ownership of ninety-one people and families. This is despite the fact that 60 per cent of Mumbai's population lives in slums, mostly comprising rooms measuring of 3.05 m by 3.05 m. So, even if ULCRA is repealed, how much of the land unlocked in the process will actually go to meet the housing needs of the urban poor is a serious question.

- Economic growth: Mumbai should become a hub of high end services like finance, IT, IT enabled services, entertainment and healthcare together with generating low end, high volume services like infrastructure development, construction, retail, hotels and tourism. To bring more

investments into Mumbai the task force recommended developing special areas like the Thane-Belapur industrial area be developed as a township with Special Economic Zone like incentives, the Gorai area be developed into a Special Entertainment zone (Government of Maharashtra 2004: 20).

However, the recommendation is silent on the process by which land is going to be acquired and what would be the compensation (if any) given to the people from whom land is acquired.

> Physical infrastructure (for example, upgrade six suburban train stations under the Station Area Transport Improvement Scheme (SATIS), finance and expedite the building of 17 high speed road corridors under the Mumbai Urban Infrastructure Programme etc.) (*ibid.*: 22).

The demolition drives carried against slum communities and street vendors to implement projects like SATIS has also been brought out in the study. According to a member of an association working on street vendors,

> The eviction and removal of hawkers without notice to the hawkers and public is a regular phenomenon under SATIS with the purpose to improve the commuter and pedestrian movement and traffic circulation around railway station. SATIS has been proposed at 6 suburban stations in Mumbai, namely, Ghatkopar, Andheri, Borivali, Dadar, Malad and Chembur. The estimated cost of the SATIS for the suburban station is Rs 709.44 million (Interview).

One can infer from the above recommendations that the Task Force emphasised on physical infrastructure and economic zones to attract foreign capital and transform the city to match the aesthetic sensibilities of a certain class of people. Therefore, there is hardly any mention of social infrastructure like building or revamping the already exiting (and languishing) elementary municipal schools and hospitals. A. Ghosh (2005) notes from the experience of Bangalore Action Task Force that land titling for efficient property markets, credit ratings of municipal bodies, and increased regulation on land and infrastructure may make less sense in a country where the majority of the population has become marginal-ised in terms of access to resources, employment, and basic rights; the reforms further weaken their bargaining position. Therefore, policies that may seem technically sound, efficient, or promote good governance require much deeper evaluation in terms of repercussions on government policies, initiatives, and the process of urban reform.

Bypassing ward committees: The constitutionally given space for CSO participation in urban governance through ward committees is

underutilised in Mumbai. The members of CSOs in the study preferred to interact with non-elected decision-makers at the higher echelons of the administration, like the Additional Municipal Commissioner, who is an IAS (Indian Administrative Service) officer appointed to the post for a fixed term. In the process, they bypassed the already weak elected representatives and undermined their legitimacy. Working of such partnerships depends on idiosyncrasies of the top executive. Whereas the earlier Additional Municipal Commissioner encouraged the formation of the NGO Council, his successor almost ignored its existence.

Again, this mode of functioning with the executive creates a power tussle in the civic administration in two ways. First, it defeats the 74th Amendment's goal of strengthening local self-government; power within MCGM is with senior IAS officers appointed by the state government. Competition becomes fiercer when different parties rule the city (Mumbai) and the state (Maharashtra). Shiv Sena has ruled MCGM since 1999, while the state has been ruled by Congress. Thus, the control of MCGM by state-appointed IAS officers is resented by the elected representatives of the city.

And second, the elected councillors have a strong mandate from low-income group voters in slum areas. It is estimated that at least 167 of the 227 (about 74 per cent) of the election wards are in the slums. An analysis of the voting patterns of the 1997 corporation elections showed that high voter turnout was correlated with slum residence. This suggests that councillors are more likely to represent the needs of the slum dwellers, as they recognise the latter as their main constituency (Baud and Nainan 2008). Even the NGO Loksatta, which has a large member-ship base across cities and claims to be the political outcome of the largest civil society movement, has failed to include slum communities and informal sector workers. Its experiment of the area sabha has thus remained restricted to the taxpaying citizens only. As a member explained, 'Slums are not participating in the area sabha because of difficulties stemming from their very existence. Their existence depends on political patronage and hence they are inhibited to join our move-ment' (Interview).

The Citizens' Roundtable and the Road Committee functioned as high powered think tanks. On governance reforms, the Mumbai Task Force recommended:

> At the administrative level, strengthen the post of Secretary (Special projects) and make it directly responsible to the Chief Minister at the political level, form a Cabinet Sub-Committee to review the progress of the plans and projects and the mayor should be directly elected, form a Citizen Action Group comprising eminent citizens under the chairmanship of the

Chief Minister, to monitor that the recommendations of the Task Force are implemented and do not remain in paper, create a transport authority for Mumbai to develop an integrated approach to road and rail transport, create a semi independent agency within MCGM for maintaining roads and pavements, empower the Heritage Committee to coordinate city wide strategy on street furniture, road beautification, street side shops and urban design (Government of Maharashtra 2004: 10).

Each of these recommendations goes against the letter and spirit of the urban governance reforms as envisaged in the 74th Amendment. The idea of strengthening the post of a senior executive and placing it directly under the Chief Minister is an obvious sign of greater centralisation. There is no mention of strengthening the ward committees (that is constitutionally provided for, but poorly implemented), municipal councillors, or of other mechanisms suggested to work towards peoples' participation and the goals of democratic decentralisation. The idea of vesting all powers in the hands of the Mayor has also been criticised in favour of the Mayor-in-Council in order to keep checks and balances. Again, the nomination of some eminent citizens to the Citizen Action Group directly under the Chief Minister would prevent it from making independent suggestions. Having set no criteria for the selection of its members, the composition of this Group would again be an undemocratic exercise.

Bypassing elected representatives: This brings us to the significant point of the so called nexus between the local politician and the poor citizen that cropped up throughout the study. Major sections of the urban poor preferred to be affiliated to some political party and elected representatives in their locality. This point was brought out during an interview of a food vendor:

> We have been living under the threat of eviction for many years. But slums that were constructed before 1995 have certificates so we are less threatened than the ones that came later. However, I do face other threats. For instance, I do not have a license to run my stall and no other documents except for my ration card. The other day, staff from the Maharashtra State Electricity Board came to check the electricity meters in our area to prevent theft, etc., and asked me for my license. I was in serious trouble. But we get help from our local leader Ashok Bhau Jadav, the *Amdar* (Member of Legislative Assembly). He lives in the Irla Basti only. There are many other celebrity leaders from K West like Hema Malini, Shabana Azmi, the late Sunil Dutt, and now his daughter Priya Dutt. They come here during election rallies, at other times we do not see them. We know that this time the councillor from K West is an independent candidate selected by various CSO groups in Mumbai especially Juhu. He has

initiated new projects and is in the process of completing pending ones like roads, lanes, parks, repairing and beautifying them, filling potholes, revamping the municipal schools, cleaning Juhu. For this he has received help from NGOs. But without the support of political parties I do not know how long he can sustain his work and what he can do for the welfare of slums.

M. Dewit emphasises the importance of councillors:

An active councillor means more to a slum than a lot of broad based policy objectives. A slum which does not meet the criteria to be part of an improvement programme, but has an active councillor, can be better provided for in terms of infrastructure than a slum in an adjacent constituency that does meet the criteria but has no one to endorse them... The authority, be it a political links one like a councillor, or a non-political one like an NGO, is regarded as a source of goods ... a source to be treated with due respect ... do not bite the hand that feeds you... Only the political source is accountable, needs something from the dwellers and can be voted out of office, whereas the NGOs remain aloft, untouchable (cited in Benjamin 2000: 44-45).

Lobbying and advocacy: Lobbying and advocacy are important strategies for the CSOs to influence policy decisions. A group of CSOs – Loksatta (with a strong base in Hyderabad), Juhu Citizens Welfare Group, and Janagraha in Bangalore – are vociferously advocating a model of good governance with the area sabha concept and is lobbying hard to legislate the Nagar Raj Bill with various provisions on urban governance. Others CSOs like the Malabar Hills Residences Association (registered as a trust in 2006) is lobbying with MCGM for branding the Malabar Hill area. For this, the Association has collected Rs 5 crores from MCGM to revamp both the Kamla Nehru Park and the Pherozeshah Mehta Garden, repair the paved pathways and relay the footpath around the Kamla Nehru Park. It has also submitted its plan on hawkers to the Urban Development Department, Mumbai.

Recounting its experience on lobbying for policy changes, the convener of the NGO Council elaborated,

Karmayog took the initiative to write to senior officials in MCGM, other government departments, and politicians informing them about the formation of a coordinating group and expressing the desire to explore how to work together. The Additional Municipal Commissioner responded positively and suggested to take up solid waste management as the first area of the partnership. Karmayog identified and involved nearly 100 groups and individuals with experience and expertise on solid waste including all-India experts, several ALMs and these eventually became the

NGO Council team with each person or organisation contributing their specific knowledge. The NGO Council contributed to two new laws: the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation Cleanliness and Solid Waste Rules, 2006, and the Local Area Citizen Group Charter, 2006, as well as several draft policy papers and recommendations to Government. Karmayog and the NGO Council currently have a memorandum of understanding with MCGM, and collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Bureau, Maharashtra, to enable sustained partnership between these Government agencies and civil society (Interview).

Conclusion

In the backdrop of the normative connotation of urban governance, defined as

> the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city...a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action can be taken...includes formal institutions as well as informal arrangements and the social capital of citizens (unhabitat.org),

CSOs partnerships in Mumbai fall short on both grounds.

First, the current discourse about the city and its development is being articulated in a manner that naturalises the processes of exclusion linked to a politics of 'spatial purification' which centres on middle-class claims over public spaces and a corresponding movement to cleanse such spaces of the poor and working classes (Fernandes 2004). Squatting on public lands and the proliferation of street vendors and hawkers is linked to larger processes of economic restructuring which have been ignored in the emerging discourse of the CSO partnerships.[4] E. Berner (2001) observes that sprawling informal settlements in and around most of the world's cities demonstrate the capacity of self-help housing, but their image as 'slums' belies the tremendous economic value they represent as well as the indispensable role they play in the urban economy. Street vendors are viewed as a problem for urban governance; they, however, supply the urban poor with many of the commodities and services of everyday life at cheap prices. They also help maintain safety through 'eyes on the street' that best captures the process of 'maintaining public order: the curiosity and vigilance of hundreds of people (small shopkeepers, vendors, fruit sellers, butchers who tended their enterprise all day) throughout the day doing the "unpaid" work of sustaining public order' (Scott 1999: 277).

Second, the formal institutions of decentralised governance, namely, the ward committees are not being strengthened. There is room for

participation of CSOs, but that aspect is being neglected. An NGO representative in a ward committee noted that CSOs should act as a pressure group and not ignore this constitutionally given space for participation despite its shortcomings,

> CSOs working in Chembur got together to form a pressure group (an umbrella body) called the Samajik Vikaas Manch. There are twenty CSOs in total in this group. The aim of this body was to speed up the implementation of the 74th Amendment and put pressure on the councillors in our ward to nominate the NGO/CSO representatives. NGOs like Apnalaya (which took a lot of initiative to bring together CSOs), CORO, PATH, Samaj Jagruti Sangh, Nav Jivan Samiti, Pragantik Vidyarthi Samiti were all part of the pressure group. Such activities and experiments have happened in M ward. If they happen in other wards of Mumbai then things will speed up (Interview).

The informal (also the unaccountable) component of local urban governance is gaining strength through partnerships like ALMs and the NGO Council, the use of extra constitutional methods (alliances with other institutions backed by the corporate sector, autonomous bodies created by the state government (the Citizens' Roundtable, the erstwhile Mumbai Task Force), or even the judiciary (the Road Committee). Stéphanie Tawa Lama Rewal (2007) notes that these groups have appropriated the role of elected representatives of local people in their interactions with the municipal corporation and state government and its para-statal agencies. The success or failure of such partnerships largely depends on informal interactions and the extent of lobbying with ULB. Power and decision making rest with the MCGM executive, which ultimately decides how many trucks should go to the area to collect garbage, at what intervals, the number of sweepers, and the availability of other facilities like taps, organic manure, etc. When CSOs like ALMs become strong, they act as a pressure group on MCGM, though much to its disliking.

Notes

1. The urban poor comprise construction workers, casual labourers, and the self-employed. Like the rural poor, their wages have no protection and they have no bargaining capacity. Mehta (cited in Hazareesingh 2000) argues that the poor in the urban informal sector are worse off than the rural poor in three respects: (i) they do not get wages in kind and, therefore, do not get automatically compensated for the price rise; (ii) they are mostly migrants from rural areas and lack the kinship network when a contingency arises; and (iii) they incur obligatory miscellaneous expenses which could be avoided in rural areas. Planned allocation for urban development, including different targeted programmes for the urban poor, has been inadequate and

its share in the total plan expenditure has dwindled over successive Five-Year Plans. In the new economic scenario, the contraction in public expenditure and subsidies, and the withdrawal or lowering of fiscal incentives and the protection given via directed credit and statutory requirements for investment, would result in a worsening of the urban employment scenario and a further deterioration in the provision of urban basic services for the poor (Hazareesingh 2000).

2. The Constitution of India describes India as a Union of States. The Centre legislates on its subjects (List I). The states have exclusive power in certain areas (List II), share power with the Centre in some fields (List III), and also control the administrative machinery at the lower levels. Though there is no local list, the Twelfth Schedule (Article 243-W) lists the eighteen functions that could be devolved to municipalities by the state government, indicating an overlapping (Pinto 2008).

3. The management of solid waste is an obligatory duty of the urban local authorities, further strengthened by the 74th Amendment which lists the functions of the local bodies in the Twelfth Schedule of the Constitution. Solid waste management has been, by and large, neglected by municipal administration; this led to the intervention of the Supreme Court, following a PIL (public interest litigation) suit, that resulted in the Municipal Solid Waste Management and Handling Rules, 2000 under the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

4. As the service sector (software industry, film industry, and media) expanded and started moving northwards and government intervention for the development of Central Business Districts assumed prominence, the search for new lands consequently gained priority. The hitherto uninhabitable 'bad lands', occupied and subsequently made habitable by so called squatters or illegal citizens also came to be eyed upon. Vast tracts of land like the Bandra Kurla Complex metamorphosed into 'prime' real estate that could house the growing needs for commercial and office space. This development went on simultaneously with the eviction of the people who came to occupy and develop this land in the first place. The latter began to be labelled as squatters and therefore, 'illegal' occupants (Kantha and Parthasarathy 2006). With government and companies shirking from providing social housing or housing to its employees and escalating rents, housing is almost unaffordable to even many sections of the middle income groups (*ibid.*: 36). A speculative boom in property and real estate markets in the 1990s undermined manufacturing units located in old industrial areas and led to the regeneration of these areas as new commercial and residential enclaves. A process of informalisation across all industries gathered pace in the 1980s and 1990s, as industries, in search of cost saving, contracted out stages of the production process to temporary labourers in a factory or to outside agents and home workers. This was facilitated by the emergence of new forms of casual and contract labour and the growth of labour-intensive small-scale informal workshops, often in slums and squatter settlements, operating beyond the writ of the legal protection and regulation of the formal sector of the urban economy (Pacoine 2006).

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Disappearing Daughters and Intensification of Gender Bias: Evidence from Two Village Studies in South India*

T.V. Sekher and Neelambar Hatti

Why are female children still at risk in India despite progress in education, increasing participation of women in economic and political activities, and an overall improvement in the status of women? Is there any significant shift from 'son preference' to 'daughter discrimination'? Based on a study of two villages from low-fertility regions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, this paper attempts to understand the factors responsible for the increasing discrimination against girls, even before they are born. The widespread use of sex-determination tests and abortion facilities has given an opportunity for parents to achieve the desired family size and the desired gender composition of children. There is an intensification of gender bias particularly among the peasant communities. The rapid fertility decline, not accompanied by changes in the cultural values and gender inequality, has resulted in a deliberate attempt to 'get rid of girls'.

[Keywords: daughter discrimination; female foeticide; fertility decline; son preference; sex selection]

Having a daughter is like watering a flower in the neighbour's garden.

– Tamil proverb

Considerable attention has been paid by researchers to different aspects of female deficit in India (Visaria 1971; Miller 1981; Sen 1990; Agnihotri 2000; Croll 2000; Bhat 2002; Kaur 2004; Patel 2007). The 2001 Census has generated further debate on the issue and has narrowed the focus to the changes in the juvenile or child sex ratio.[1] Change in the sex ratio of children aged 0-6 is a better indicator of status of girl child in India. It

also reflects the sum-total of intra-household gender relations. Why millions of girls do not appear to be surviving in contemporary India, despite an overall improvement in welfare and state measures to enhance the status of women? Why is daughter discrimination on the rise despite progress in female literacy and growing participation of women in economic and political activities? Is there a significant shift from perceived 'son preference' to deliberate 'daughter discrimination'?

While the 2001 Census shows that the overall sex ratio has marginally improved from 927 women per 1,000 men to 933 per 1,000 during the last decade, the number of girls to boys in the youngest age group fell from 945 to 927. The regional disparities also appear to have increased: the northern states generally exhibit a worsening trend in sex ratio as compared to the southern states. The census evidence suggests a clear cultural preference for male children, particularly among some North Indian states. The census lists 'sex-selective female abortions', 'female infanticide', and 'female neglect' – typically through giving girls less food and medical care than boys – as 'important reasons commonly put forward' for this shocking anomaly. The new figures point to the use of new technologies to determine the gender composition. The accelerated fall in the child sex ratio after 1981 is largely due to the diffusion of prenatal sex-selection techniques in regions with well-entrenched gender bias (Bhat 2002; Hatti *et al.* 2004).Furthermore, as social norms are changing toward smaller families, the availability of and access to new reproductive technologies provide an easy way for parents to achieve such goals.

One of the most remarkable changes in the 20th century has been the shift from high to low fertility and this has been described as the greatest single demographic change in the second half of that century (Caldwell 1993). The timing, onset, pace, and magnitude of this decline varies between countries. The 2001 Census indicated that, after a large spell of unprecedented population growth, India experienced a gradual decline in the fertility levels. However, there is also evidence that of a growing disparity between the north and the south, with the southern states having been more successful in controlling population growth.[2] In a vast country like India with considerable demographic diversity and heterogeneity and varying levels of socio-economic development, the levels and phases of fertility decline vary significantly from one state to another (Bhat 1994; Sekher *et al.* 2001; Guilmoto and Rajan 2002).

Several studies suggest that cultural factors have played an important role in determining fertility trends (Das Gupta, 1987; Basu 1992; Jeffery and Jeffery 1997). While attention has been drawn to the importance of cultural factors in studying demographic behaviour, few studies have

examined in detail the relations between cultural and economic aspects. One important cultural (and economic) feature is the value attached to sons. It is important to further analyse the nexus of economic, social and cultural factors that underlie daughter discrimination, thus shifting the focus from son preference to daughter discrimination.

Fertility Decline and Adverse Sex Ratio

In a significant article titled as 'More than 100 Million Women are Missing', Amartya Sen (1990) brought to focus the increasing gender discrimination by analysing the male-female ratio. He has argued that the problem of missing women is 'clearly one of the more momentous, and neglected, problems facing the world today' (*ibid.*: 9). B.D. Miller (1981), in her anthropological study on neglect of female children in North India, has illustrated the strong relationship between culture and mortality. It is the cultural bias against females in North India that brings into play neglect and mistreatment of unknown numbers of children.

Many studies have illustrated how the decline in fertility will affect gender bias and greater imbalance in juvenile sex ratios (Das Gupta and Bhat 1997; Clark 2000; Bhat and Zavier 2003; Nanda and Veron 2005; Vella 2005). A substantial decline in fertility presupposes a desire for fewer children as well as access to the means to limit the family size. Both these conditions can be achieved with increase in social and economic development. It is generally accepted that the pace of demographic transition is closely associated with the levels of socio-economic development. However, there is evidence to show that, even in the poorer regions, substantial decline in fertility has occurred through political intervention, in the form of family planning programme. The social and economic development and governmental interventions, however, do not ensure any substantial change in the cultural ethos of the society. In South Asian societies, it is believed that a major barrier for decline in fertility was the prevalence of strong son preference, irrespective of social and economic development.

It is also argued that with the increase in welfare and economic development, the influence of son preference would decline gradually. These assumptions are being questioned by some studies indicating that there has been an increase in son preference during the years of fertility decline. This occurs not only in poorer communities but also in populations where women have taken to education and employment and have achieved considerable social status. M. Das Gupta (1987) has found that excess female mortality for second and subsequent parity daughters was 32 per cent higher than their siblings for uneducated mothers and 136 per

cent higher if the mothers were educated. Alaka Basu makes a similar observation: 'although her capacity to increase the chances of survival of her children seems to increase with education, the typical Uttar Pradesh woman's ability to treat her male and female offspring equally actually decreases' (1992: 196). The existence of strong son-preference has resulted in the desire to prevent the birth of daughters by carefully balancing the desired family size and desired sex composition of the children. In other words, the decline in fertility partly explains the rising masculinity of many populations (Das Gupta and Bhat 1997; Croll 2002).

It is hypothesised that as fertility declines, two opposing forces could affect the child sex ratio, what is called as 'parity effect', which leads to a reduction of sex bias and 'intensification effect', which increases it. Considering this dimension, there is a need to examine the influence of the mirror image of son preference, namely, the daughter discrimination. Does a strong son preference ultimately result in deliberate discrimination against daughters? Miller asserts that, 'the problem is that son preference is so strong in some areas of India and amongst some classes that daughters must logically suffer in order that family's personal and culturally mandated needs are fulfilled' (1981: 25). Logically, this would mean that stronger the son preference, more intense the daughter discrimination.

Rather than going through repeated pregnancies bearing daughters in an attempt to produce male progeny, the norm of small family size and reduced fertility seem to imply that unborn daughters are the first to be 'sacrificed'. Generally, both infanticide and fatal neglect of female children seem to be supplemented by sex identification and sex-selective abortion to achieve the desired family size and desired gender composition. Better opportunities for women's education, increasing labour force participation, and greater exposure to urban life do not necessarily guarantee equal status for daughters. In many Indian communities, daughters are associated with a double loss. Firstly, a daughter leaves the natal family after her marriage and the benefits from investments made on her upbringing accrue to the new family, constituting a loss to her natal family. This is further compounded by the expenses of her marriage, particularly dowry, which are a heavy burden for the bride's family.[3] Sons, on the other hand, are considered as assets, deserving short and long-term investment. In rural India, the birth of a boy is thus a time for celebration while a birth of a girl, especially second or subsequent one, is often viewed as a time of crisis (Bumiller 1990). Besides economic considerations, there are cultural factors that support son preference. All these factors put together contribute to the firm belief that daughters cannot substitute sons.

A general explanation for son preference is that sons can provide old age support. In India, a majority of the old parents live with married sons. The Indian context, characterised by high levels of uncertainty, where no institutional alternative to the family as a source of social insurance has emerged, parental decisions are likely to be powerfully motivated by their concerns about their own security in the old age. The existence of such an understanding and commitment between parents and sons, known as inter-generational contract, is one factor that appears to have remained unchanged through overall socio-economic changes. Sons are also important because they alone can perform the funeral rituals of the parents. Added to this, most women have very limited opportunities to contribute towards their parents' welfare. This creates an apparent dichotomy between the value of a girl to her parents and that of a woman to her parents-in-law.

It has also become more expensive to raise children as education has become more important and a necessity in a transforming society. The increasing cost of education and marriage of girls is a major drain on the household resources, which acts as a strong disincentive to have daughters.

The underlying workings of female discrimination are undoubtedly highly complex. However, many broad factors have been identified which together create a situation where sons are preferred and daughters are neglected. The patterns of inheritance are typically patrilineal in India with property passing from father to son (Miller 1981; Agarwal 1994; Kabeer 1996). Upon marriage the bride leaves her natal home to live with the family of her husband. In this exogamous lineage system women are left out. They become dispensable essentially because they count for very little as individuals.

In recent years, a major factor directly influencing the imbalance in child sex ratio is the widespread use of sex-determination technologies and sex-selective abortion. Misuse of sex-determination tests has been a subject of media attention for many years. Health activists and women's organisations have voiced their concern forcing the government to act. In 1994, the Government of India banned the tests at the national level, with the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (PNDT) (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act. This Act specifies that no prenatal diagnostic procedures may be used unless there is a heightened possibility that the fetus suffers from a harmful condition or genetic disease. It also states that no person conducting prenatal diagnostic procedures shall communicate to the pregnant woman concerned or her relatives the sex of the fetus by words, signs, or in any other manner. This Act was again amended in the light of the newer techniques of pre-conception tests and the amended law came

into effect in 2003. Now, the Act is renamed as the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex-selection) Act, 1994.[4] This legislation has been a miserable failure in preventing the couples seeking sex-determination tests and abortions and the medical practitioners performing them.

Female fetuses are liable to victimisation on the basis of their sex alone even before they are born. Only far-reaching social changes that aim at increasing female autonomy, female economic power and the value of the girl child are likely to make a significant impact on the demand for sex-selective abortion. Interestingly, there is no reliable statistics available on sex-selective abortion at the state or national level in India. An indirect estimate using the data from two rounds of National Family Health Survey[5] (NFHS) indicates more than 100,000 sex-selective abortions in India every year (Arnold *et al.* 2002). The evidence of substantial sex-selective abortion in states such as Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, and Maharashtra is consistent with the high rates of use of ultrasound and amniocentesis (Retherford and Roy 2003).

How does fertility decline and son preference manifest at the village level, particularly in the context of widespread availability of sex-selection techniques at low cost? By studying two villages in the low-fertility regions of South India, we attempt to understand how these factors interplay at the micro-level with changing socio-economic conditions. The main objective of this field enquiry was to study the precarious situation of female children before birth (their chances of being born at all), at birth, and during the first six years of childhood. In order to gain an understanding of the dynamics it is essential to look into household and individual behaviour. Here, the main concern is how reproduction strategies and specific gender discrimination practices vary among households belonging to different socio-economic groups. It is important to understand how the desire for sons, whether strong or weak, is directly related to daughter discrimination and neglect. The focus group discussions (FGDs) and in-depth interviews were done to elicit information about the value of boys and girls, reproductive preferences and strategies. The qualitative research methods employed in the study provided very useful insights. A focus group, generally consisting of 8-10 persons with similar socio-economic and demographic background, encouraged lively discussions on specific issues, moderated and facilitated by the researchers. The entire discussion was tape-recorded which helped in the preparation of detailed transcripts later. The focus group discussions provided not only experiences and opinions of the participants but also their perceptions on various issues. The information gathered through FGDs was supplemented with individual interviews.

All these qualitative information was pooled together and synthesised to arrive at conclusions. The average time taken for an FGD was 90 minutes. The focus group discussions were conducted in panchayat offices, temples, *anganwadi* centres,[6] and, in some cases, at the residence of the informants. Retaining all the participants till the end of an FGD was a challenging task. In general, villagers were very forth-coming in expressing their views and revealing their perceptions.

Mandya District:
A Low Fertility Region of Karnataka

Mandya district, located in the central belt of southern part of Karnataka, has been geographically classified as southern *maidan* (plains) region of the state. The district is compact with high population and village densities. More than 60 per cent of the total population of the district belongs to a single peasant community, the Vokkaligas (Gowdas). With the paucity of land for further expansion of area under cultivation, the long history of irrigation and its impact, and the Vokkaliga's love for land and cultivation have been documented by social scientists (Epstein 1962, 1973; Srinivas 1976). There were fewer land transactions and the land values have increased considerably in recent decades. Landholdings of less than 2 hectare form nearly 85 per cent of all holdings. The large holdings with more than 10 hectares accounted for only 0.33 per cent of the total holdings and about 4.54 per cent of the total land held. Thus, marginal and small farmers were predominant in the district. The fortunes of a man generally depended upon the size of landed property of his father and the number of siblings with whom he would have to share the property.

Agricultural land, with assured canal irrigation, is the backbone of the economy of the district. The major crops are paddy, sugarcane, ragi, and coconut. Sericulture and handloom weaving are the two other important economic activities, which provide work for thousands of families. The district recorded a population density of 355 per sq. km in 2001. The male literacy rate was 72 per cent and female literacy, 52 per cent in 2001.

Observations from the Study Village M

Village M is located about 8 km from Mandya town (district head-quarters). Coconut gardens and fields of sugarcane and paddy along with canals and streams surround the village. As per the 2001 Census, there were 637 households in this village with an average household size of 5.

The literacy rate was about 60 per cent. The general sex ratio was 926 (females per 1,000 males) and the child (0-6) sex ratio was 732 in 2001, a considerable decline from 825 in 1991.

The advent of irrigation brought overall changes in the pattern of cultivation and consequently, improved the economic condition of land owning families. Ownership of land implies regular food availability and income for the families. Therefore, land is the most important economic resource for the villagers. Most farmers use high yielding varieties of seeds and apply fertilisers. The availability of irrigation pump sets, tractors and power tillers in a way replaced significant part of agriculture labour. The easy availability of credit and marketing facilities also helped farmers. The access to the commercially vibrant Mandya town with many trade and industrial establishments also encouraged many villagers to take up employment in the town. However, fragmentation of land and unpredictability of agricultural production and prices made many of them sceptical, as narrated during FGDs:

> *Fragmentation of land has taken place due to partition of the families, and everybody now having only smallholdings. So, parents don't prefer more children in order to prevent further division of their land.*

The population of the village has increased from 761 in 1951 to 2,921 in 2001. Nearly 70 per cent of the households were Vokkaligas, the dominant community in the village as well as in the district. Vokkaliga in the local language (Kannada) means 'cultivator', and, traditionally the Vokkaligas have been agriculturists. Undoubtedly, the Vokkaligas control bulk of the cultivable land in the village. According to the 2001 census, 36 per cent of the total workers were cultivators and 24 per cent were agricultural labourers in this village. Twenty-one per cent of the households belonged to the scheduled castes.

We observed that dowry, wealth flow from bride's family to groom's family, has become a common practice in all castes and communities. The communities that did not practice dowry in the past have now started this in a big way. This has put a heavy burden on the girl's family in arranging for dowry demanded by the boy's family and also meeting the increasing marriage expenses. Having more children is a financial burden on the family in terms of sending them to school and in performing their marriages. Scarlett T. Epstein documents the emergence of dowry practice in two Mandya villages:

> In Wangala, it was Beregowda, one of the most enterprising peasants, who initiated change to dowry payments. He explained that three considerations had motivated him to take this step: first, he was keen to get an educated

husband to his daughter. Second, his daughter had not been trained to work in the fields and far from being an economic asset she would be a liability as a wife; finally, he said, Brahmins had always given their daughters dowries (1973: 197).

Another study of a South Karnataka village describes the changes in dowry practices thus:

> The major change was the coming of dowry. In the early 1950s, the first dowries in Bangalore were paid by some Brahmin families. Not until the beginning of the 1960s did the first Brahmin landlord family in the study area provide a dowry and not until 1965 was this done by the first Vokkaliga (the major peasant caste) family. It is still not paid by Harijans [scheduled castes], although in the largest village they ceased paying the *tera* (bride price) five years ago, and the payment is still small among some of the backward castes. Nevertheless, they all anticipate its arrival. In all castes, the bride's family now bears the major portion of the wedding costs, and it is they who seek loans and sell land' (Caldwell *et al.* 1982: 707).

The observations from FGDs illustrate how dowry has emerged as an essential part of marriage negotiations:

> *In our colony, Kamala has two sons. Her elder daughter-in-law has not brought anything, but the second daughter-in-law has brought a huge dowry. Therefore, the younger one receives more respect than the elder one. Including the husband and in-laws, threaten the elder one for not bringing dowry. I have seen them beating her also. Any time, she will be sent back to her natal home'.*

> *Boy's parents consider it is their right to collect dowry. They never think about the economic position of the girl's parents.*

> *They never realise it can happen to their daughter also.*

> *Some parents are forced to give their land as dowry.*

> *No marriage in this village has taken place without giving gold and cash to the boy's family.*

> *I don't want daughters. Even if I spend Rs 5,000 for abortion; it is better than spending Rs 500,000 on dowry.*

Prosperous Gowda families are ready to pay even half-million to one million rupees as dowry, besides giving gifts in the form of gold jewellery, car, furniture, etc. Usually the girl's family has to bear the

entire marriage expenses. The dowry paid and the gifts given depend upon the qualification and employment position of the boy and land-owning status of the family (see Tables 1 and 2). During our fieldwork,

Table 1: Range of Dowry in a Village in Mandya District (1970)

Community	Occupation/ education of the son-in-law	Dowry paid (approximate)	
		Cash (Rs)	Items
Rich Vokkaligas	Educated, with a job in the city	3,000–4,000	Jewellery (Rs 3,000) and cloth (Rs 3,000)
Middle Class Vokkaligas	Educated	1,000–2,000	Jewellery and cloth (Rs. 3, 000)
Poor Vokkaligas	-	Up to 1,000	Cloth and jewellery (Rs. 1500)

Note: Based on the description and case studies presented by Epstein (1973: 94-99)

we came across young Vokkaliga couples having only one child, *mostly male*, and deciding to accept family planning. According to them, if they had more than one child it would be extremely difficult to provide good education and meet the cost of upbringing. As narrated in our focus group discussions, since land was limited, it was difficult to maintain the standard of living.

> *Earlier in this village, scheduled castes never used to give dowry. After seeing Gowdas, they also started. Some people believe that paying more dowry is a prestige issue for the family. They sell their land or borrow money to give dowry.*

> *Even though girls with some education may try to oppose the payment of dowry in villages, they generally give in to the parental/family pressure as the marriage negotiations progresses.*

The discrimination in providing primary education to boys and girls was evident during the discussions with school teachers.

> *Some people send their sons to convent school (better quality education) and daughters to government school (poor quality education).*

> *Why to spend on daughter? Son gets good education and will earn money for the parents. Daughter, one or another day, has to leave the house.*

Table 2: Range of Dowry in Village M (2005)

Community/ Caste	Occupation/education of son-in-law	Dowry (cost)	
		Cash (Rs)	Items
Rich Vokkaligas	Groom is employed in government/private job and settled in the city	3-5 lakhs	Land, car, 100-130 grams gold, clothes, all other expenses towards marriage
	Groom is employed in government /private job and settled in the village.	2-3 lakhs	Scooter, 80-100 grams gold, clothes and all other expenses towards marriage
Middle class Vokkaligas and other castes	Groom is in government /private job and settled in the City	1-2 lakhs	Land, scooter, 60-70 grams gold, clothes and all other expenses towards marriage
	Groom is in government/ private job and settled in the village.	Less than One lakh	Land, scooter, 60-70 grams gold, clothes and all other expenses towards marriage
	Groom is an agriculturist, settled in the village.	50,000	60-70 grams gold, clothes and all expenses towards marriage
Poor labourers Scheduled Castes and other castes	Landless agricultural labour (groom)	10-20 thousands	10-20 grams gold, and clothes and all other expenses towards marriage
Vodda* households	Landless labour (groom)	5-10 thousands	10-20 grams gold and all expenses towards marriage. 101 articles like Vessels, etc.

Note: * Vodda is a scheduled caste community that migrated from Tamil Nadu and settled in the village in the 1960s.
Source: FGDs carried out by the authors in 2005.

Generally, the Vokkaliga families are nuclear. After marriage, women have no right over the parental property, including land. The sons inherit all family assets. During our interviews and FGDs, we found that there was a strong preference for small families; interestingly, most of the couples had already accepted family planning. It was the Vokkaligas

who, by accepting contraception, paved the way for other communities towards birth control.

The type of fertility transition experienced in this village and other parts of the district has been unique, and one can see a strong relationship between population pressure on land and rapid fertility decline (Sekher and Raju 2004). The paucity of cultivable land and availability of irrigation have resulted in increasing land values. The landowning Vokkaliga desires to have only one or two sons to avoid further fragmentation of land. As mentioned by Epstein,

> They now appreciate that large number of children creates economic problems of future generations. But most of them still have a strong son preference. They continue procreating until they have at least one son. For example, Shangowda had one son after his wife had given birth first to two daughters. He and his wife then decided that three children are enough for them. A large proportion of villagers pursue the same strategy. In this too, old beliefs and customs persist in a changed setting (1998: 196).

The Vokkaligas consider land as the source of old-age security, along with the son. Alan R. Beals, while studying social change in a Mysore village 50 years ago, has stated that,

> Namhalli's landowning group, while not threatened with starvation, has been faced, in recent years, with the problem of dividing a limited quantity of land among an ever increasing population. Within the village many solutions to this problem, ranging from abortion to the adoption of iron ploughs, have been tried. In almost every family in Namhalli, at least one child has been groomed for urban employment (1955: 98).

The focus group discussions with women of the village illustrate the strong son preference and intense desire to limit the number of children:

> *After having two daughters, my mother-in-law told me not to go for sterilisation. Then I thought, if I continue like this, it will be very difficult for me, and I may die. Then I went to a doctor and decided to have operation.*

> *I got operated immediately after the birth of my second child. My husband gave me full support in this decision.*

> *I have a daughter; my husband wanted at least one boy. My mother-in-law became sad and cried when I gave birth to a girl child.*

During our fieldwork we observed that a majority of the young couples underwent sex-determination test, either in a private clinic or a nursing home. People from village M go to nearby Mandya town, where two nursing homes are known for conducting abortions. During FGDs among the Vokkaliga and scheduled caste women, we found that almost all were aware of the facilities available to find out the sex of the foetus. We also came across cases where some public health workers, particularly Auxiliary Nurse and Midwives, were providing information and advising village women 'how to get rid of unwanted daughters'. Many women openly admitted that several doctors in Mandya city conduct both the test and the abortion. In a few cases, people went to places like Bangalore and Mysore. This was expensive for the family, but rich Gowdas were ready to spend money for what they consider a 'good purpose'. For conducting sonography and disclosing the sex of the fetus, private nursing homes in Mandya charge between Rs 1,000 to 2,000 and, if a woman prefers to undergo an abortion, she has to pay an additional Rs 5,000. During our FGDs, many women justified persuading their daughters or daughters-in-law to opt for abortion saying that it is better to spend a few thousand rupees now than spending a million rupees later, thus avoiding all the future problems like education, marriage, dowry, etc. One woman said that had this facility (ultrasound) been available 20 years ago, she would have gone for it to reduce the number of daughters. She said (in Kannada), *'Hecchu edi kere haal maadtu; Hecchu henninda mane haalaaitu'* (too many crabs destroy the lake; too many daughters destroy the house). In her efforts to have a son 20 years ago, she gave birth to three daughters. A few observations from FGDs are as follows:

> *If one becomes pregnant, the family won't tell she is pregnant. She is taken to find out the sex of the baby. If it is a girl, the foetus is aborted immediately. Everything is done in a secretive manner.*

> *Rame Gowda's wife died during abortion. Poor woman, she has left behind two daughters.*

Another woman explained (in Kannada) the necessity for having a son: *'maga manege; magalu pararige'* (son is for our family; daughter is for others). When asked about whether they depend on their sons for protection during old age, most men and women said 'yes'. Some of them strongly felt the necessity to have at least two sons. Krishne Gowda quoting a local (Kannada) saying substantiated his argument: *'ondu kannu kannalla; obba maga maganalla'* (freely translated it means one eye is not enough to see, one son is not enough for the family).

It is very evident that the practice of dowry has spread to all communities. The girl's family is under pressure to meet a series of payments for the marriage, beginning with engagement and concluding with the bride actually going to reside in the groom's house. In many communities, the practice of dowry was unheard of about thirty years ago, but it has now become an essential feature of the marriage. Apart from dowry, it is a well-established norm among all communities that all expenditures for conducting the marriage have to be borne by the girl's family. Considering all these expenses and practically no return, many feel that having a daughter is a 'real burden' for the family. An old woman appropriately summarised (in Kannada) the situation: '*Yavaga. honnina bele eruthade, avaga hennina bele iliyuthade*' (whenever the price of gold goes up, the value of the girl goes down).

The findings from the sample household survey (96 young male or female parents having at least one child in the age group 0-6) carried out in village M show the changing attitude towards the perceived value of sons and that of daughters. Out of 96 respondents, 66 are Vokkaligas and the remaining are from the scheduled castes. The son preference is strong among the Vokkaligas: nearly 77 per cent of them want either one son or two sons (and no daughters!). Only 18 per cent of them consider that their ideal family comprised of one son and one daughter (see Table 3). More than four-fifth of them felt that daughters were more expensive to bring up than sons and 71 per cent were apprehensive of the problems/difficulties associated with suitably marrying off their daughters (see Table 4). Nearly half of the mothers perceive that the future life of their daughters will be worse than their own. However, only 12 per cent of fathers felt that the life of their sons will be worse (see Table 5).

Salem District of Tamil Nadu:
A Low Fertility Region Known for Female Infanticide

Salem district recorded the lowest child sex-ratio in South India in 2001. This district attracted considerable attention in the 1990s for the prevalence of female infanticide (George *et al.* 1992). A study carried out based on available PHC (Primary Health Centre) records confirms the incidence of female infanticide in the districts of Salem, Dharmapuri, and Madurai (Chunkath and Athreya 1997). The worsening child sex ratios of 2001 Census have amply substantiated the still existing and rampant practice of female infanticide in parts of Tamil Nadu, despite overall socio-economic changes in Tamil Nadu (Sekher and Hatti 2007).

In Salem district, the average household size was 4.0, with a literacy rate 65 per cent in 2001. Two major communities of the district are

Table 3: Ideal Family Size According to the Respondents in Village M

Ideal family size	Community	
	Vokkaligas	Scheduled Castes
One son	30.3	17.4
Two sons	46.9	47.8
One daughter	4.6	4.3
One son and one daughter	18.2	30.4
Two daughters	-	-
Total	100	100

Note: Figures in percentages

Table 4: Value Attached to the Children by Parents in Village M

Value of boys and girls	Communities	
	Vokkaligas	Scheduled Castes
Sons are more expensive to bring up than daughters	21	24
Daughters are more expensive to bring up than sons	87	72
Will you face difficulty in arranging marriage for your son?	18	42
Will you face difficulty in marrying off your daughter?	71	89
Son will take care of you when you areold	63	74
Daughter will take care of you when you are old	9	12

Note: Figures in percentages

Table 5: Vokkaliga Parental Perception about the Future
of their Children in Village M

Parental perception		Men	Women
How do you think life will be for your daughter(s)?	Better		11
	Worse	NA	49
	Like your own		40
How do you think life will be for your son (s)?	Better	39	
	Worse	12	NA
	Like your own	49	
Total		100	100

Note: Figures in percentages; NA = not applicable

Vanniyars and Kongu Vellala Gounders. The Vanniyar originally formed the fighting force of the Pallavas and, hence, came to be called as 'Padayachi'. Their community cohesiveness is remarkable. Some of them practice agriculture as their main occupation. The traditional occupation of Vanniyar is oil pressing and oil selling. The nuclear family is the most common form among them. Sons inherit property and the eldest son gets a greater share. Daughter does not have any right to the property unless they have no brothers. Vanniyars are categorised as Most Backward Caste and the state government has reservation policy for them. Kongu Vellala Gounder is an inhabitant of the Kongu region of the Tamil Nadu. Agriculture is the traditional occupation of this community. The other economic activities are animal husbandry, trade, industrial labour etc. They are hardworking agriculturists and specialised in horti-culture.

Observations from the Study Village K

According to the 2001 Census, the village K in Mettur taluk has 1,341 households, with a total population of 4,983 (2,676 males and 2,307 females). The average household size was 4.0. The overall literacy rate was 47 per cent. The general sex ratio was 862 and the child sex-ratio was 616 in 2001, a decline from 673, as recorded in 1991. Three major communities in this village are Vanniyar, Kongu Vellala Gounder, and scheduled castes.

During our filed work we came across incidents of female infanticide in the village. Though some families, including women, were hesitant to talk about it, there were a few who openly justified the practice. Though the practice was more prominent among the Vanniyars, other commu-nities also occasionally indulge in infanticide. On many occasions, though the mother of the child was not directly involved, the elder members ensured the elimination of female infant within a week after birth. The methods used for this purpose included feeding the child with poison, loosening the knot of umbilical cord, suffocating baby to death, feeding with paddy husk, and starving the baby to death. A more 'modern' method recently observed was the use of pesticides or sleeping pills. Some elders use the prediction of local astrologers ('fortune tellers') as a strong justification to get rid of the daughter who would 'cause destruction to the family'. As one old woman, narrating the plight of her family said: 'it is better they die than live like me'. *Penn shisu kolai* (female infanticide in Tamil) is justified for various reasons. Though many families tolerate the first girl, the subsequent daughters are really at high risk. The general observation that the female infanticide

was confined to certain backward communities like Kallars has been proved erroneous. It has spread to communities like Gounder, Vanniyar, and Pallars. Our discussions in village K indicated that it was not only the poor who practised infanticide, but the rich and powerful in the village also resorted to *penn shisu kolai*. There were few police cases registered recently against parents for committing the infanticide. But, the arrival of sex-determination tests, has given a new method for those who can afford to pay. Many economically better off families admitted that they avoided the birth of another girl 'with the help of doctor'. However, poor women in the scheduled caste colony said, 'We cannot afford to pay for test and abortion. So we still practice infanticide, which is much cheaper.' Our study clearly shows the practice of female infanticide was being substituted by female foeticide, particularly among the Gounders. The combined efforts of the state, NGOs, and some panchayat leaders have had some impact on reducing the incidence of female infanticide. Pregnant women already having a girl child used to be classified into high-risk category and were monitored closely by local NGOs.

Among the Kongu Vellala Gounders, dowry was reported as the major reason to avoid having daughters. A few observations from FGDs are cited below:

> *Parents of the bride borrow money from all sources; sometimes they sell their land to meet the marriage expenses.*

> *After paying so much dowry, they continue to demand more. If she fails to bring dowry, the husband and in-laws start harassing her. That is why many people don't want daughters.*

There has been a phenomenal increase in the amount of dowry transacted in the village. The landowning Gounder has to pay at least 80 sovereigns of gold, Rs 2 lakhs cash, and a car, as well as to meet all the lavish expenditure to conduct marriage. The manifold increase in dowry among all communities repeatedly came up in FGDs. The Vanniars are not far behind: the rates ranging between 40 to 60 sovereigns of gold, car or motorbike, and marriage expenses. Even the landless dalits (the poorest in the village and depending upon agricultural work for their livelihood) pay gold (5 to 10 sovereigns) and meet the marriage costs, which can easily exceed Rs 25,000. Borrowing money to meet these 'unavoidable' expenses has pushed many families into the trap of indebtedness, on the one hand, and social obligations, on the other. According to one dalit women, *'having a daughter is a punishment for the sins committed in*

previous life'. In most of the marriage negotiations, the first criterion was
how much dowry would be given.

> Modernisation ushered in the importance of material status, driving the
> need to be extravagant and to show off as a way of asserting one's social
> standing. For well-off Gounders performing *seeru* (dowry) and the conduct
> of marriages of daughters became an important forum to display new
> found prosperity and to assert their status within their community (caste
> group) (Srinivasn 2005: 602).

This explains why daughters were unwelcome, resulting in a deliberate
intensification of non-preference of daughters and consequent increase in
son preference.

Even the affluent families who can 'afford' daughters and can provide
them with good education are sceptical because, as a local leader put it,
'the higher the education of the girls, the higher the dowry'. It is also
true that 'an increase in the prevalence of dowry, which has raised the
costs of bringing up children, and created a situation of financial distress,
have also contributed to the fertility decline in some segments of
population' (Krishnamoorthy *et al.* 2005: 245). Marrying off a daughter
without giving a decent dowry can have serious consequences for the
natal family as well as for the daughter. One respondent expressed her
worry thus:

> *The in-laws may humiliate our daughter, demand more dowry, ill treat her
> and finally she may be forced to return to our home. How can we allow
> this to happen to our daughter?*

Apart from the demand at the time of marriage, the demand after
marriage for more dowry, resulting in the fear of ill treatment of their
daughter if the demands are not met, is a perennial worry for many
parents. The inability to pay the amount of dowry demanded could also
lead to a delay in the marriage itself and an unmarried daughter would
pose many a problem for the parents.

Concluding Observations

The two village studies clearly illustrate that, in the eyes of parents,
daughters are rarely able to substitute for sons. Although the will for
limiting the family size is evident across communities, 'smart couples'
achieve the desired family-size and the desired sex-composition of
children together. The new reproductive technologies that are available
are employed by parents from all communities. Notwithstanding the

extent of use, it is also an indication of the easy availability and affordability of sonography and abortion facilities despite the legal hinders such as PNDT Act. As narrated by a literate woman in Village M, *'Had these clinics were available 30 years ago, many of us would never have seen this world!'* According to an NGO activist in Tamil Nadu study village, *'the real culprits are the medical doctors who misuse the technology to increase their profits'*. Though the 'technological' effect' may mainly be responsible for the elimination of female foetuses, the powerlessness of village women in a patriarchal society is an equally important factor to be considered. Personal interviews with young women in the study areas reveal that, many a time, they were forced to undergo sonography and abortion, much against their wishes.

In both study areas, FGDs show the tendency to identify the daughter with dowry payments. The continuing trend of increasing dowry demands, in cash and in kind, is a crucial factor in marriage negotiations as well as a 'status enhancer' within the community. The dowry had significant impact on how the parents value the worth of boys and girls, even today.

Interestingly, the two peasant communities (the Vokkaligas and the Kongu Vellala Gounders) in the study villages have become increasingly affluent as major beneficiaries of access to irrigation and other inputs of modern agriculture. This affluence has meant a continuing rise in living standards, consumption, and aspirations. Besides acquisition of various trappings of modern life, one way of demonstrating their economic affluence, according to FGDs, was to get a 'well-qualified son-in-law', as this would enhance their status and standing within the community. This desire would, no doubt, gradually inflate the dowry demands of the boy's family and also increase the wedding expenditure of the girl's family. Hence, the increasing costs of education and marriage and a conviction that dowry rates can only move upwards compel the parents to seriously consider the investment in and return from a daughter as against the benefits that can accrue to the parents from investing in a son. Both the landed and the landless in our FGDs cite this as the most important reason for preferring sons over daughters. In both villages, the small family is the accepted norm, parents seem to make the deliberate choice between a son and a daughter: son would mean inflow of wealth, while daughter implies financial drain. The affluent communities, which not too long ago considered payment of large dowries as a symbol of their capability and status, now realise that such payments constitute a threat to their affluence, lifestyles, and aspirations, and, consequently, prefer not to have daughters.

As a result of the growing affluence of the landowning communities, the cash flow among the landless agricultural labourers has also

increased due to higher wages, most of which is being paid in cash than in kind. This fact coupled with the desire to imitate the customs of the higher castes in the village, a kind of sanskritisation process, has meant that the practice of dowry payment has permeated to the landless lower castes, thus increasing the expenses of marriage of daughters. Consequently, these communities also exhibit similar preferences to avoid having daughters, albeit to a lesser extent.

The observations from the two low-fertility regions of South India and the survey data analysis show a strong preference for sons, particularly among the peasant communities. However, with the substantial decline in fertility in these regions, the son preference appears to have resulted in an increased as well as intensified manifestation of deliberate discrimination towards daughters. The widespread use of sex-selection techniques has provided an opportunity for couples to choose a son rather than a daughter. The increasing pressure on limited land, on the one hand, and the spiralling cost of bringing up children (particularly girls, due to dowry), on the other, parents prefer not to have daughters. The medical technology has come in handy for many for achieving the desired sex-composition and the desired family-size. The rapid fertility decline, not accompanied by changes in the cultural values and gender inequality, is in a way responsible for the intensification of gender bias and the deliberate attempt to deny the girls from being 'born at all'. In other words, female foetuses are increasingly being 'victimised' on the basis of their sex alone, even among the affluent communities.

Notes

1. The Census of India measures the sex ratio as number of females per 1,000 males, as opposed to the standard international norm of number of males per 100 females. Defining the sex ratio by covering children in the age group 0-6 may seem arbitrary, but the Census uses it for the purpose of literacy status, categorising the entire population into two groups: those aged 0-6 years and those 7 years and above.

2. For a detailed review of fertility transition in South India, see Guilmoto and Rajan (2005). Quantitative and qualitative analysis of fertility changes in four southern states have been made available under the South India Fertility Project (www.demographie.net/sifp).

3. In the era of globalisation and consumerism, dowry payment is more a rule than an exception. Many communities in South India, where the practice of dowry was totally absent earlier, have started making huge payments in recent decades at the time of marriage. In many families, even after the payment of dowry, there is continuing unidirectional flow of resources from a woman's parental household to her in-laws. Dowry has emerged as a strategy to acquire higher standards of material life with adverse consequences to women's status, including their survival. For a detailed description of the changing nature of dowry practices in South India, see Srinivasan (2005).
4. However, the first court-case and conviction under this Act did not happen until March 2006, when a doctor and his assistant in the state of Haryana were sentenced to two years in jail (*The Hindu*, Bangalore, 30 March 2006).
5. National Family and Health Survey, similar to Demographic Health Survey in other countries, comprises a nationally representative sample of households covering ever-married women in the age group of 15-49 years. This survey has been conducted thrice: first in 1992-93, then in 1998-99, and recently in 2005-06 (IIPS and Macro International 2007).
6. The *anganwadi* centers are nursery schools for children aged 3-6 years which provide nutritious food under the Integrated Child Development Scheme of the Government of India. Almost every village has an *anganwadi* centre, which also provides a meeting place for pregnant and lactating mothers.

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Book Reviews

Ajaya Kumar Sahoo, Gavin J. Andrews and S. Irudaya Rajan (eds.):
Sociology of ageing: A reader. Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2009, x + 459
pp., Rs 1,195 (hb). ISBN 81-316-0190-0

This volume examines the different aspects of older people's economic,
social, and cultural lives. The twenty-five papers put together by the
editors revolve around three core themes. The first theme perceives the
world as ageing, highlighting the significant increase in the size of the
world's elderly population, which, by 2050, is expected to expand to
more than one-quarter of the world's population. The elderly population
is not only growing but also diversifying, according to the second theme.
The diversification gets channelled through social and cultural under-
pinnings and features, and is facilitated by the participation of aged in
greater range of activities fuelled by the globalisation process.
Responding to these two changes and reflecting on the wider sub-
disciplinary progress, the third theme focuses on the expansion of the
sociology of ageing, addressing its current status as a distinct and wide
ranging endeavour that transcends the parent discipline.

The twenty-five papers in the volume are categorised into three parts.
In a short review, it is impossible to do justice to all the contributions
that have enriched the volume. I will, therefore, assign prominence to
some papers and ideas that I found to be found stimulating.

Part I contains eight papers showcasing theories on ageing, debate on
the changing nature and character of ageing, and discussions on ageing
perspectives and research directions. Supported by empirical evidence,
Jean-Marie Robine and Jean-Pierre Michel have attempted to outline a
general theory on population ageing. They discuss health expectancy and
disability with utmost scientific rigour. Jyrki Jyrkama's paper, though
short and inviting criticism, appears interesting as it ponders on Peter
Laslett's theory of the 'third age' – the period during which the
individual can fulfil her/his personal goals, dreams, and life plans, with
no responsibilities or ties to anything. Besides wealth and health as
immediate requirements, the need for right attitude and strong-

mindedness conducive for making the right 'third age' choices is also acknowledged.

Part II brings together eight papers focused on the economic and health aspects of ageing. Ken Tabata's paper discusses a mathematical model of ageing supported with empirical data on how population ageing increases the healthcare costs of the economy exponentially. Stephen Crystal and Usha Sambamoorthi have made an appreciable effort as they discuss the issues and research challenges in the healthcare needs of older persons affected by HIV/AIDS. The issue is important as the affected ageds are facing trauma due to two reasons: the older people with healthcare needs feel dejected when unattended, and the problem becomes acute when one gets affected by such a highly dreadful and socially stigmatised disease. The varied dimensions and implications in relation to the topic have been discussed by the authors with utmost diligence and social commitment. Alan Walker's paper on active ageing in employment talks about preventing any aspect of ageing from becoming a negative factor in the labour market. It focuses on the policies necessary to utilise active ageing as an effective engine of participation and social inclusiveness in employment. Alexandre Kalache discusses the formulation of action plans that promote healthy and active ageing. Judith Healy's paper details a perspective on the benefits of ageing population. Healy concentrates on three positive areas with respect to family relationships of an ageing population: the community care provided by older people for the older people, the assistance rendered by the older people to their adult children, and the appreciation of their role as grandparents.

Part III of the book addresses the social and cultural perspectives of ageing. A qualitative analysis of the marital status and social networking of older men has been undertaken by Kate Davidson in her paper titled 'Why can't a man be more like a woman?' Other aspects discussed in this Part – such as the lived experience of old rural adults, spirituality of the aged, the special mobility patterns of the aged, etc. – reflect the wide range of sub-disciplinary progress as well as the efforts to bring out the intricate details.

The book does justice to the core themes concerning the aged. Careful selection and neat arrangement of scholarly papers and authentic analysis of the different aspects of ageing make this book a useful reading for specialists and general readers alike.

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Amita Baviskar (ed.): *Contested grounds: Essays on nature, culture and power.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008, vii + 259, pp., Rs. 650 (hb). ISBN 978-0-19-569585-4

Nature as a hotbed of conflict and struggle is the core theme of this volume, which offers a fresh perspective by introducing the idea of cultural politics over the valid but often economically determined rubric of political ecology. The essays in this volume were originally contributed to a conference on 'Resources: Conceptions and Contestations' organised by the South Asia programme of the Social Science Resource Council, New York and held at Kathmandu in 2003.

The introduction locates resources in the current context where technologies and truths are often created by those who dictate the world order. As Amita Baviskar argues, certain postulates of political ecology – such as the binaries of communities versus the almost always 'vicious state', looking at natural resources primarily for their material use value, and cultural identities as set – are often problematic. This justifies the vantage point of 'cultural politics' which treats identities, interests, and resources as fallouts of dynamic cultural practices. Quoting Donald S. Moore, she adds that culture, therefore, is viewed as being a constructed site of political struggle marked inevitably by power, process, and practice. This premise gives a voice to people having multiple identities in the process of their struggle; depicture of which is often brought forth by ethnographic accounts of scholars studying these struggles. Baviskar also introduces keywords such as waste, scarcity, security, territory, sovereignty, frontier, conflict, expertise, and community, whose changing meanings highlight the shift in culture politics. These become themes for the remaining nine essays in the book.

David Gilmartin's work on the canals in the Indus basin takes up the theme of waste. Village commons being denigrated as waste by colonial engineers became a cornerstone to dismantle the indigenous structures of villages and link villages to the overarching political system. Gilmartin makes an interesting analysis in history where scientific and engineering manipulation of the environment undermined the community values and enabled colonial rule to consolidate state power and revenue collection.

That scarcity can be both real and constructed is a theme Lyla Mehta deals with in her work on the Kutch region of Gujarat. Her empirical work in a village revolves around how nations often conjure problems in order to gain access to resources. She links the Sardar Sarovar Project, which, despite concerns and protests, was constructed as an absolute necessity to do away with water scarcity plaguing Gujarat. Despite its completion at the cost of massive destruction and displacement, it fails to

deliver water to the water thirsty regions in Kutch. This essay delivers well on its theme as Mehta succeeds in delineating water as a resource whose scarcity is almost always linked with socio-political factors, institutions, and hydrological factors which operate on it. Hence, scarcity, she argues is temporal and cyclical and, most importantly, determined in its relative and distributional aspects.

Resource wars as a concept has been propagated, rather superficially, for states with plenty of resources but weak political structures by the United States and international organisations. Simon Dalby discusses the theme of security in its relation to natural resources. That complex cultural histories and specific geographies are ignored in favour of universal and overarching explanations often results in a superficial linking of conflict with environment. Dalby insists that, in order to question what meets the eye, environment geopolitics have to be reconsidered in the discourse of environment security.

Territoriality as being dependent on mobility is demonstrated in David Ludden's extensive work on Sylhet. His account captures intricate patterns from the historical details to the current day scenario. A region which has seen as many changes in its inhabitants as it has in its administrative structure makes Sylhet a delight for social scientists across disciplines. The struggle for political control of this region reflects its trajectory from being regarded as wasteland to becoming valued and contested for its strategic location. Today, Sylhet exists both as a unique region and community and as an export in regions where the Sylheti diaspora has migrated. As Ludden concludes, it would be wise to understand that resources rarely, if ever, respect the boundaries chalked out on paper or battlefields.

Sovereignty almost naturally follows territory. But, when challenged with multiple identities and claimants, it fails to deliver, as Michael Watts demonstrates with reference to a resource-rich nation marked by tensions and contradictions. In oil-rich Nigeria, the concept of nation is defeated as multiple ethnic groups, a weak government and international petroleum giants, battle for the black gold. The title 'Economies of Violence' aptly conveys the three scales of chieftainship, indigenousness, and nationalism which mark governable spaces when discussing oil politics.

Two essays that are situated in Indonesia look at frontiers and community. Anna Tsing discusses Kalimantan as a frontier where resources are up for grabs both by legal and illegal means, provided one has the will to take the risk. In this regard the indigenous Meratus Dayaks and migrants are often beaten to the resources by transnational companies but manage to get a share of the deal by means of their resourcefulness. The mantra is to get rich, ironically, in the face of

destructive dispossession of the other. Tania Li examines power relations and creation of a community in a National Park in Sulawesi, Indonesia. The battle for resources has pitted groups against each other (indigenous versus locals), converted partner NGOs into foes, and forced all those involved to seek conflicting solidarities.

Conflict resolution in the context of resources has become supreme. Michael Thompson takes a different stand when he discusses how conflicts at some levels may be desirable in order to arrive at a truly democratic resolution. The use of the word 'clumsy' with regard to institutions which actually incorporate disagreements and allow differences is a welcome departure from its conventional use. The need for expertise is becoming increasingly mandatory, almost overriding governments and establishing an overarching technocracy to look at the environment. Ironically, as Steve Rayner discovers, this lowers accountability and alienates people, thereby adversely affecting their participation.

All the essays in the volume are successful in incorporating and furthering the approach of cultural politics of natural resources. Empirical work combined with theoretical rigour on environment issues across the world makes this volume a useful resource for social scientists and interested readers alike.

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John Dreijmanis (ed.): *Max Weber's complete writings on academic and political vocations* (translated by Gordon C. Wells). New York: Algora Publishing, 2008, xii + 221 pp., US $ 40 (hb) and US $ 24.95 (pb). ISBN 978-0-87586-549-2 (hb) and 978-0- 87586-548-5 (pb)

Max Weber, every student of sociology would concede, is perpetually fascinating. Reading, understanding, and conceptualising Weber are, therefore, an ongoing process. His remarkably penetrating insights into the making of modernity, his sharp reflections on world religions, and above all, his methodological concerns with reference to the understanding of social actions gave him the kind of status in the discipline that only the likes of Emile Durkheim and Karl Marx could match. No wonder, even now when a book of this kind comes to us, we get excited. We begin to reflect once again on the central theme of the book: Weber's illuminating pieces on academic culture as well as politics.

How often we – particularly, those of us who are engaged in the vocation of teaching – ask ourselves a pertinent question: are we supposed to remain purely detached, cold, rational, and analytical in the classroom, and state only hard facts and explain diverse theoretical

postulates to make sense of these facts? Or, are we also expected to bring out values, fundamental moral/ethical questions, and inspire students to choose a particular worldview? Yes, it was almost a century back that Weber reflected on similar issues, argued with his contemporaries in Germany, and' spoke and wrote extensively. An academic, he asserted repeatedly in a series of articles, is not a demagogue; a university classroom is not a political gathering; a professor is not a prophet. A university is just a rational site that exists only for disseminating or theorising facts, not for asking teaching students what they 'should' do in life. See what Weber wrote in an essay titled 'Academic Freedom in the Universities':

> It is not the business of universities to teach a worldview that is either 'pro' or 'anti' state or indeed any other worldview. They are not institutions whose function is to teach ultimate beliefs. They analyze facts and their real conditions, laws and connections, and they analyze concepts and their logical proposition and contents. They do not and cannot teach what should happen, for this is a matter of ultimate personal value judgments, a worldview that cannot be demonstrated like a scientific theorem.

A perspective of this kind would be understood better if we look at his celebrated essay 'Science as a Vocation'. For Weber, to accept the ethos of science is to give one's consent to the growing rationalisation/ intellectualisation of the world, and believe that we live in a godless/ prophetless world. Why do we exist? What is the purpose of living? These are questions – fundamental questions relating to the meaning of existence – science cannot answer. Because science is not a 'gift of grace from visionaries and prophets offering revelation and the benefits of salvation'; nor is it a 'constituent part of the meditation of sages and philosophers on the meaning of the world'. Instead, science, argued Weber in no uncertain terms, is a 'profession practised in specialist disciplines' which are not concerned with mysterious things, but only with those things that can be 'controlled through calculation'. For example, using the means at his disposal, the medical practitioner keeps alive a terminally ill patient; but it is not possible for him to answer whether or not such life is worth preserving. What, however, science can do is to offer knowledge about 'techniques of calculated control over life', to provide the tools of knowledge, and to give us 'clarity'. We become clear about the most efficient means to achieve an end; but whether or not the end itself is worth pursuing is a question that exists beyond the domain of science.

Another illuminating piece the volume carries is 'Politics as a Vocation'. An engagement with this article does indeed acquire a new

meaning, particularly when politics is becoming 'power politics': an obsessive pursuit for one's narrow selfish ends. True, as Weber reminded us, a politician, unlike a religious leader, need not follow 'an ethic of ultimate ends'. However, it is absolutely important for him to pursue 'an ethic of responsibility'; he should be willing to accept and bear the responsibilities of the consequences of his actions and policies. That is why, there are three qualities which are chiefly decisive for the politician – 'passion, responsibility and a sense of proportion'. This is to negate 'vanity' or self-love:

> The striving for power is the inescapable means by which he practises his profession. The 'power-instinct', as it is usually known, is therefore in fact one of his normal abilities. The sin against the holy spirit of his profession begins where this striving for power loses its objectivity and becomes a mater of purely personal self-intoxication, instead of being employed solely in the service of a 'cause'.

How subtle this vocation is. One lives in the world of power; yet, 'there is no more pernicious distortion of political strength than worshipping power itself'. Weber wrote in a specific socio-historical context. Times have changed. Yet there is something in his writings that transcend the boundaries of time and space. We cannot remain unaffected by his profound insights. A volume of this kind, thanks to John Dreijmanis, is bound to arouse the attention of students, teachers, and researchers.

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Lancy Lobo and Shashikant Kumar: *Land acquisition, displacement and resettlement in Gujarat, 1947–2004.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications India, 2009, xxiii + 304 pp., Rs 895 (hb). ISBN 978-81-7829-938-9

The volume under review is part of an all-India study on compilations of data on development-induced displacement in different states. Displacement induced by economic growth and rehabilitation has been a serious concern for all developing countries, and more so in India. Every year, according to the World Bank estimates, dams, highways, ports, power projects, urban improvements, mines, pipelines, petrochemical plants, and other such industrial development projects globally displace about 10 million people. In India alone, during the last five decades, involuntary resettlement is estimated to have affected about 50 million people, particularly, tribal and rural. With the liberalisation of the economy more and more private fund is flowing into large-scale infrastructure

development in India, and hence more people are continuously getting displaced. Three-fourths of those displaced in India still face an uncertain future. However, till date, no authentic data is available on the displaced people under numerous public and private developmental projects.

Traditionally, little thought went into addressing the factors that limit the benefits available to project-affected families, making a series of rehabilitation action plans unsustainable in the long run. The vast literature generated over recent decades on displacement, resettlement and rehabilitation issues in the country has largely focused on recording the detrimental social, cultural, and economic consequences development projects have had on the lives of local project-affected families. This literature has been useful in identifying systemic problems underpinning resettlement and rehabilitation. Worldwide, resettlement experience shows that the single most factor damaging the quality and outcomes of resettlement is the absence in many countries, including India, of policy and legal frameworks that define the rights and entitlements of people affected by development-related, state-imposed displacements. The existing law gives very little opportunity to the affected party to challenge the process of acquisition or even to demand fair compensation and rehabilitation.

The authors of this volume have painstakingly gathered data from various research centres, universities, government departments/project authorities, ministries and government gazettes on all the developmental projects in Gujarat and analyzed the impact of displacement and deprivation on various strata of society. The information presented covers 139 sites and 1,937 households from different parts of the state over a period of 60 years (from 1947 to 2004). The study also included a sample survey of project-affected households, with special reference to tribal people, dalits, and Other Backward Castes to learn the conditions of the displaced people in the new locations.

The authors – one an active sociologist and the other an expert in the field of urban and regional planning (under the guidance Walter Fernandes, a senior subject expert) – see development-induced displacement, resettlement and rehabilitation not just from the academic point of view. They address the issue of public policies related to land acquisition, resettlement, and rehabilitation as well. They also touch upon the trends in land acquisition and transfer in the state by referring to the Government of Gujarat Special Economic Zone Act, 2004. They suggest that there is an urgent need to create a people-centric developmental model, where people who have given up their land and their livelihoods could be made the immediate beneficiaries of the project. It is a model that recognises rehabilitation and resettlement

issues as intrinsic to the development process, and it must be formulated with the active participation of affected persons, rather than as an externally imposed requirement. It should also ensure that the actual Rehabilitation Action Plan would be developed and implemented with an active collaboration of all the principal stakeholders, that is, the government, the project authority/company and the affected community through an open dialogue and a transparent two-way communication process.

Of late, growing public concern over the long-term consequences for project-affected people is resulting in greater public scrutiny of the rehabilitation and resettlement process, particularly for large development projects. Whether as a result of increased public scrutiny on the social responsibility of corporate houses, or a pragmatic recognition of the time and cost overrun implications of a badly conceived rehabilitation strategy, an increasing number of industrial ventures as well as several state governments have been paying greater attention to developing a more robust rehabilitation strategy for project-affected families, and have committed to spending substantial sums of money on the rehabilitation process. Many states in India now have a forward-looking Resettlement and Rehabilitation (R&R) Policy in place (for example, Orissa R&R Policy, 2006; Jharkhand R&R Policy, 2008; Arunachal Pradesh R&R Policy, 2008). It is also worth mentioning here that there are two important Bills pending before Parliament: Bill No. 98 of 2007 – The Rehabilitation and Resettlement Bill, 2007, and Bill No. 97 of 2007 – The Land Acquisition (Amendment) Bill, 2007. Once these Bills are passed by Parliament and notified in the gazette, the displaced persons would be empowered to demand their resettlement and rehabilitation as per its provisions and seek its enforcement in the court if the government fails to meet its commitment.

This book is a welcome addition to the existing literature on land acquisition, displacement, and rehabilitation.

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Mahmood Mamdani, David A. Hollinger, Aziz Al-Azmeh, Wang Bin, Emmanuel Renault, and N. Jayaram: *Identity (Keywords – For a Different Kind of Globalization)* (Series Editor: Nadia Tazi Nadia). New York: Other Press, 2004, xii + 149 pp., price not mentioned (pb). ISBN 1-5901-105-0

Complexities associated with the concept of identity are immense and the range of meanings varied, confusing not only the students of identity but

also the stalwarts. Amidst this ambiguity of usage, the book on *Identity* comes as a pleasant surprise. The book is written as a part of Keyword Series, which brings together scholars representing different disciplines from six nations – United States, Europe, Africa, Arab, India, and China. The six essays based on the study of these six nations have not only brought forth various dimensions and issues related to the concept, but also succeeded in showing how the manifestation of identity is influenced by historical, cultural, and political contexts. The strength of the book lies in its easy and interesting read.

Almost all the authors have projected identity as a social construct and have focused on its contextual and flexible nature. They found 'group affiliation as incidental rather than definitional to the process of identity building' (p. 31). Discussing the complex socio-cultural bases of identity in India, N. Jayaram has shown how identity can emerge at various levels of multilayered structures of society. Through a detailed discussion of the identity markers – names, apparel, ornaments, artifacts – he has acquainted the readers with the politics of symbols, process of appropriation, changing power equations, and the ambiguities arising due to overlapping (modern and traditional) structures. The discussion reveals that identities have to be understood beyond simple institutionalisation process of existing ethnic groups, in the negotiations made by individual actors in their day-to-day life situations.

Mahmood Mamdani, however, has concentrated on differentiating cultural and political identities. Working on Africa, he feels that the process of group formation is dynamic and it has to be seen in historical and political contexts. Discussing the changes in ethnic identity projection during the colonial rule in Africa, he has shown how the earlier identities have been negated and new identities projected more in line of prevailing power and economic structures and to re-define the social stratification system. In fact, almost all the authors have covered the organisational role of identity, which is marginalising and discriminatory for some and empowering for the others.

The individual and collectivity orientation of 'identity' is yet another issue that has kept the authors engaged and the historically prevailing socio-cultural organisation of the society has been considered as the defining principle. While due to the social-cultural nature of Indian society, Jayaram submits that in India individual identity is subsumed in the collective identity, David A. Hollinger has discussed the possibility of emergence of hybrid cosmopolitan individual identity in the fluid society of America. This cosmopolitan identity, however, gets shaped in accordance with the ethnic organisation of the society. In his essay, he has discussed Collin Powell, who denied the possibility of evading one's

identity, especially if it is the identity of a Black, even in the fluid society of America, which is organised on ethno-racial lines.

Emmanuel Renault has discussed how and where the cultural identity is different from political identity. He feels that the cultural identity attributes a sense of meaning and social worth. Identity conflict emerges when this meaning is not recognised by 'the others' as identity confirms one's values system while negating that of the others. The sentiments of injustice arising either from a denial of one's dignity or from awareness of infringement on one's values has the potential to generate identity conflict. Using the terms, *Shen Fen* and *Ren Tong,* Wang Bin has also dwelled on the differences between individual and collective identities. *Shen Fen* refers to the manner in which a person looks at herself/himself and the fact that the traditional and historical events of the society shape this image. *Ren Tong* is trans-cultural political representation of identity.

Bin and Hollinger have also discussed the commodification of identity in the modern nations, where more and more attempts are envisaged to formalise identity through the state-released papers like driving license and visa. This, on the one hand, 'fixes' identity of an individual and, on the other, gives opportunity not only to evade one's identity but also to take that of another for various political, economic, and social purposes. Analyzing *Shen Fen Zheng* or the identity cards issued to the Chinese citizens, Bin has shown how this kind of formali-sation has the possibility of extending state control on the identity of the citizens.

Keyword Series is an ambitious project. It aims to capture nuances of the concept 'identity' in historical and spatial perspectives as well as to address various dimensions of the concept by approaching it through various disciplines – history, sociology, political science, psychology, literature. But, is it possible to capture divergent expressions and dynamics of such a complex concept in short twenty pages? Again, can such a short coverage do justice to local nuances? Nevertheless, despite this lacuna the book has to be appreciated as it extends an opportunity to look at universal concepts like identity in specific cultural perspectives. The essays have well captured different semantic contexts and how these contexts have influenced manifestation and dynamics of the phenomenon of identity. Foremost, one has to acknowledge the concern expressed by Aziz Al-Azmeh, Bin, and Jayaram that identity is not a native term and indiscriminate borrowing of western terms fail to capture indigenous dynamics. The essays have shown how imposition of concepts like identity impose a new reality – factionalising the earlier existing groups or homogenising otherwise heterogeneous reality in line with western thought of 'a culture' and 'a people'. The book has convincingly captured

the shifting meaning of identity and the hegemonic processes that indiscriminate borrowing of western concepts initiate. I feel that more deliberations in the nature facilitated by the Keywords Series are required to develop social sciences – their concepts and theories – at global level yet resisting the process of hegemony.

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Mathew Aerthayil: *Impact of globalisation on tribal people: In the context of Kerala.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications (in association with Indian Social Institute, Bangalore), 2008, 180 pp., Rs 495 (hb). ISBN 81-316-0233-8

This book, based on a study conducted by Mathew Aerthayil among the tribal people of Kerala, maps the socio-economic conditions of a marginalised community under the influence of globalisation. It focuses on the experience of tribal people in Kerala, the most backward section of the state, and analyzes how different policies under globalisation have affected their day-to-day social life and livelihood. They include employment opportunities, changes in their income patterns, availability of essential commodities (mainly public distribution system), health, education, condition of women, and the changing aspects of their socio-cultural and religious practices.

The introductory chapters give a comprehensive description of the globalisation process in India, the socio-economic and cultural situation of the tribal communities in Kerala, the process of land alienation and struggle for land, and different governmental policies that are envisaged for tribal development in the state and their relative benefits. The subsequent chapters confirm that, as a result of new developmental policies under globalisation, there are many negative effects.

Aerthayil justifies his argument, on how the tribal people suffering from the new policies, by advancing empirical evidence. About the public distribution system, he says that the tribal people in Kerala though were economically backward had some food security. But, in the post-reform period, due to the central government's policy of reducing subsidies on food grains, the tribal people are not getting food grains as they used to, especially when they are also experiencing a decline in their income.

The other aspects of the study covered are health and education facilities and employment opportunities which have been more or less

completely withdrawn by the government adversely affecting the tribal people. The study found that the tribal people are not getting health facilities from the government hospitals as they used to during the pre-reform period. The reason is the decision of the government to withdraw from the health sector as part of its policy of privatisation. The policy of the government on privatisation of education is adversely affecting the tribal children. Since they were already very backward in education, they have not been able to come up and compete in modern education. The tribal people are the worse-affected section of the society due to the reduction in the governmental spending on education. Due to illiteracy and lack of basic and technical education, the tribal people are not able to get employment which is basic for their livelihood.

With regard to the socio-cultural sphere, the study has shown that globalisation has adversely disturbed the religious and cultural life and practices of the tribal people, so much so that they are getting uprooted from their cultural roots and identity. Further, it is evident that the traditional status of tribal women has been badly affected because of a drastic reduction in their employment opportunities. Non-availability of food grains in ration shops added to the woes of the tribal women and even children. In addition, poverty and starvation have made the tribal women victims of exploitation by non-tribal people.

In the conclusion, Aerthayil gives some suggestions to improve the overall condition of the tribal people under study. He maintains that the government and society at large have a responsibility to take protective measures for the welfare of these people. He suggests that the tribal people also should organise themselves for their cause and put pressure on the government to counter the adverse effects of globalisation. Indeed, an organised, collective movement of these poor people is an uphill task, particularly in absence of proper awareness, awakening, and education. Aerthayil is, however, silent about to go about organising tribal people.

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Prem Chowdhry: *Contentious marriages, eloping couples: Gender, caste, and patriarchy in northern India.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007, x + 347 pp., Rs 695 (hb). ISBN 019-568499-0

This book is an excellent combination of history and law as these operate through caste, family, state, and judicial functioning in regulating marriage of daughters and widows. Through its seven chapters and the epilogue,

Prem Chowdhry analyzes gender relations through notions of family honour and shows how Jats, the locally dominant caste of Haryana, exclude daughters but not widows from the patrivirilocal family to keep the male agnates' land intact. Based on fieldwork conducted during 1999–2003 and case law reports of colonial and post-colonial times, she focuses on three forms of contentious marriages based on the principles of caste endogamy with village exogamy, romantic love unions through elopement, and *karewa* (levirate union, that is, widow remarriage). Towards the end of her book, she analyzes the recent resurgence of forced instances of *karewa* among the Jats against the background of 1956 law of inheritance to the widow and illustrates how the state provisions support levirate *karewa*, which prevents family property from going to outsiders. For example, it provides for special family pension and other pecuniary benefits to Kargil war-widows only if they remain widows or are in *karewa* unions; a retrograde step as the law of inheritance is lost on the widow.

In the initial chapters, Chowdhry deals with the ways in which the colonial practices drew rules through consulting local leaders and codified patriarchal gender rigidities of caste endogamy, *got*, and village exogamy, besides *karewa*. These have been resilient, and caste panchayats (male, local/caste arbitration body in matters of marriage and family of the caste and village) have been gaining further strength during the post-colonial period. The principle of guardianship of the female by the male family members remains the central guiding ideology in marriage until today, and against the idea of choice. Caste, family, and village categories find disfavour with many youngsters who find work, occupation, and status outside the village more reasonable criteria for marital choice. But Chowdhry laments who cares. She finds the liberal impact of Bollywood cinema of the 1970s disappearing before the drive to save the Indian culture from the globalising influences.

The state functionaries, like the panchayat, deliberate along lines of propriety and family honour. Despite instances of overstepping the Jat marriage rules, both in the colonial and the present times, Chowdhry's cases show how resistance against familial authority and violence is difficult, because judicial functionaries work along deeply ingrained patriarchal and caste-based principles and, in effect, often at variance with the legal code. The guardianship clause supports caste and gender norms. The most contentious were the elopement marriages between members of the Jats and the lower caste, such as Nai, Chamar, and Balmiki. While female lust is seen as the main enemy in such marriages, reinforcing the family's responsibility to control female sexuality, in marriages with a low-caste boy, male lust was invariably invoked. The

panchayat's punishment considered gender and relative caste status and political and official influence of the couple and their respective families. Chowdhry's dislike of suppression of romantic love, individual choice, and hypogamy is evident through her deft handling of case material.

While the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 contradicted with the customary rules of caste endogamy, and *got* and village exogamy, the Jats maintain the customary practice of marriage for family, village and *biradari* (community) *izzat* (honour), norms shared by many a state functionary. Widow remarriage is, in fact, a widespread practice among the peasants and the lower castes in most parts of India, but it is looked down upon by the higher caste groups and is little studied.

The recent changes in Haryana, where single *got* or two *got* villages are disappearing, unemployed and poorly educated Jat males are finding it increasingly difficult to get Jat brides. While *tagri* (heavy) dowry for educated grooms with steady income enhances status, the educated unemployed are offered no brides. There is also a growing perception of the need to relax some of the customary rules of marriage alongside the resistance by caste panchayats. The book brings out the fluidity of the gradually transforming picture of caste, *biradari* and *got* considerations and their meanings in view of the increasingly different values of the educated, urban exposed and other youngsters – both boys and girls – that are in contradistinction with the caste elderly. Proverbs and parables, folk songs and reformist and moralising practices analyzed by Chowdhry are somehow paid less attention to by the urban youth with tenuous village contacts. The hold of caste on marriage was so deep that some justified having relaxed a marriage rule for themselves, but seldom held a liberal view on inter-caste marriage. The stringent control over females continues with the overall changes in Haryana, which are weakening the traditional male authority. The tensions brewing and erupting at various micro–and macro levels exhibit a complexity of relations amidst birth-based theories of membership and affiliation long understood as natural.

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Susan Hawthorne: *Wild politics: Feminism, globalisation, bio-diversity.* Delhi: Aakar Books, 2008, xv + 463 pp., Rs 850 (hb). ISBN 978-81-89833-62-6

The post-'September 11' events created a space for the imagination (maybe wild) of a world that might operate differently. Susan Hawthorne

fears that 'if we do not attempt to do so the current path may lead to escalating violence and destruction' through the development of a 'fortress mentality'. This transdisciplinary work raises some key issues. The foremost of these issues is that the inheritors of the western culture should think in much longer time frames, and the western culture needs to move away from profit motive and must base the policies on goodness of people wherever they come from. *Wild Politics* is founded on a culture inspired by biodiversity and the diversity principle enabling the western culture to move away from the vicious cycles of violence which are perpetrated in international politics, in communities, and inside the family and homes.

Let us begin by understanding the concept of 'wild'. According to Hawthorne, it has been used to bring 'together a range of possibilities for developing a new kind of politics'. It is intimately connected with the biophysical world involving re-examination of every aspect of life and lifestyle, from ways of thinking and behaving to structures of politics and economics, and the ways in which humanity relates to the world, other people, and nature. Diversity is the core principle of an envisioned culture of wild politics, as it is a feature of healthy, resilient systems. Hawthorne expands the notion of biodiversity further to include cultural diversity of human world. For her, feminism is a belief that things can change. Being a feminist requires optimism, and the book under review is both a critique of globalisation and a vision for a sustainable world for 40,000 years (too wild!).

Commenting on globalisation, Hawthorne writes, 'Globalization can be compared to a military approach to economic, social and cultural structures. The global voice is a single voice, it does not allow for responsiveness or disagreement, it is also loud. It has been described as a monotonous American screech all over the world'. No one in the early years of 21st century has remained unaffected by the market. The present work also analyzes the local and global permutations of globalisation and their effects on individuals and communities. The author focuses on feminism, ecology, and the insights of indigenous people. There are two competing forces at work in feminist interpretations of economics. The liberals accept globalisation as a positive force for women. The radicals resist globalisation and argue that still some women, indigenous people, and some others are living in the diversity matrix – in the alternative economic system. In this regard, Hawthorne argues that the economic theory should go. In the global corporate sector, the concept of ownership of land has shifted to include people, products, cell lines, intellectual property, space, and experience. If biodiversity were the inspiration of the culture, would such ownership be possible? Hawthorne

suggests, if each of us were to give more than we take, that alone would have changed the balance of survival of all on the planet.

Women's role in farming, fishing, and forestry within traditional cultures is central, whereas the process of market re-orientation results in the dispossession of women. Women are removed from the centre of these activities to the periphery, making them invisible and their work is not recognised as work – as economically productive. A wild politics examines the way in which markets function, and also asks why does it foster men's involvement?

Globalisation of production, work, and consumption is resulting in large displacements of people – the poor and the women – in both the rich and the poor countries. The transnational companies, through disconnection from their place of origin, focus more on profit than on the responsibility to their community. The dislocation of production creates dislocation in work, renders people jobless, or puts them into hazardous kinds of work. The dislocation of consumption is evident from the fact that Coca Cola, McDonalds, etc. are available in almost all places. As consumers, it is almost impossible to know how and where and by whom a particular product is made. Goods are made in one city and labelled for another place. The author gives option to the western culture to move towards dislocation or location, self-organisation, and diversity-determined social relations.

The impact of globalisation is highlighted through patents and the WTO trade structures. The patent applications have increased manifold. With patents, so important to profit, transnational legal structures have been put in place in order to protect the new (old) knowledge economy. They are intended to increase the protection around bundled property rights for the transnational sector. The continuing appropriation and privatisation of the poor – whether it be land, labour, knowledge, plant, animal, or body parts – is leading towards more and more social and personal disconnection.

Surely, Hawthorne comments that these ideas for a wild politics provide an outline for a world characterised by biodiversity, connection, locatedness, knowledge of local conditions, epistemological multiversity, and relationship. The book under review provides a framework for sustainable development of the world where, in most of the cases, it is like reverting to indigenous knowledge. One may argue that the resources may be sustained unlimitedly if they are not used. But then how can development be achieved with growth? Needs lead to innovations, and innovations turn goods into resources. With a focus on local and global politics as well as social/peoples' movements of this century, the book presents a powerful critique of global western culture and there is a

sincere message of Hawthorne, who is committed a feminist, to make efforts to sustain what we are left with. However, the powerful utopianism presented in the book makes it quixotic in intention!

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Ananta Kumar Giri: *Self-development and social transformations? The vision and practice of the self-study mobilization of Swadhyaya.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2008, xiv + 314 pp., Rs 825 (hb). ISBN 81-316-0105-6

Magasassy awardee Pandurang Shastri Athavale, popularly known as Dadaji, was the founder of *Swadhyaya*. *Swadhyaya* literally means study of self, but in the context of the movement started by Athavale it refers to the universal dimension within oneself that is connected with others as a reality as well as a possibility. *Swadhyaya* is not a sect, but a form of understanding. In *Swadhyaya*, efforts in self-study and self-development are encouraged: it involves going out with others and creating life-elevating projects. *Bhakti* (devotion) is the foundation of *Swadhyaya*. In *bhaktipheri* (devotional travel) one comes out of oneself and meets with the other. It is the first step towards self-development as co-development. *Bhakti* and Gita's *karmyoga* are the foundations of *Swadhyaya*, which brings devotion to the social field and enriches intertwinement between spirituality and human development.

Swadhyaya began in 1958 with the *bhaktipheri* of nineteen young people from Mumbai to the villages of Gujarat. It presents itself neither as a movement nor as a voluntary organisation, but as a *parivar* (family). It carried out developmental activities with the Scheduled Castes, fisher folk, diamond-cutters, businessmen, and warring groups. *Swadhyaya parivar* has spread to thousands of villages and towns in Gujarat and Maharashtra, and in the UK, the USA, some other countries in the West and in the Middle East, too.

Swadhyaya is not primarily a *project* on social development; it works with self and society, and whatever happens in society is a by-product of one's work with oneself. It emphasises self-development, which is an initiative in developing one's intellect and heart, a work of inner trans-formation. It speaks about *panchranga kranti* (or five-dimensional – economic, political, social, emotional, and spiritual – revolution). It has impact on all fields of life, most notably the emotional and social.

The book under review is an ethnographic study of the vision and practice of *Swadhyaya* carried out in twenty sample villages in Sabar-kantha. The study presents processes of actors and institutions, including the dilemmas and conflict between values and practice of the work of *Swadhyaya*. The study builds upon theoretical and philosophical work which point to the intertwinement of self-change and social change in the transformative dynamics of self, culture, and society.

The study *Swadhyaya* in Simar village near Veraval covered the work of different centres, activities, institutions, and important actors. *Swadhyayees* believe in person-to-person and heart-to-heart communi-cation. *Swadhyaya* transcends caste and class barriers and creates social networks across boundaries, thus becoming a source of enrichment to many. Nevertheless, the old structures of caste and class have a pervasive influence. *Swadhyaya* has also worked out various projects with the tribal people in Sabarkantha and Banaskatha areas of Gujarat. *Ghar Mandir* has been an important *prayog* (experiment) for inner and outer mobilisation.

One chapter deals with the issue of violence and assault on those who disagreed with the present leadership of Didi, after Dadaji passed away in 2003. This refers to the murder of a critical *Swadhyaya* leader from the USA in Ahmedabad on 15 June 2006. Questions were raised about the nature of functioning and use of funds in *Swadhyaya*. While some followers had been arrested, others have pursued their spiritual striving.

Swadhyaya primarily works for self-development and the centres create a climate of self-development, civil society, and a rich asso-ciational life in their respective locales. These centres create a public sphere for meeting and conversations. *Swadhyaya* has created an aspiration for learning among the farmers. For some *Swadhyayees,* due to *Swadhyaya,* lot of socio-economic development has taken place, whereas other self-critical *Swadhyayees* express more nuanced and sober picture of the role of *Swadhyaya* in people's socio-economic development.

Swadhyayees assert that they are not social workers, but *bhaktas* (devotees), and *Swadhyaya* is neither a social service organisation nor a development agency. But, is *bhakti* a mode of engagement divorced from social commitments and responsibility? The author suggests a greater dialogue between the discourse of *bhakti* and social work, self-development, and social development in *Swadhyaya*. *Swadhyaya's* vision and practise of *shrambhakti* (devotional labour) is an important part of relational revolution. *Shrambhakti* brings people from different castes and socio-economic backgrounds together. It has been criticised that *Swadhyaya's* discourse and narrative of self-development is confined to

people eschewing gambling and drinking, husbands stopping beating their wives, etc., but that it has not touched structural issues like encroach-ment on village common land, roots of poverty, land-distribution system, and class and caste structures.

Swadhyaya has provided some relief to the victims of earthquake in Kutch in January-February 2001, but it was silent in the face of the communal carnage in 2002. *Swadhyaya* says it is not anti-Muslim, as it is a universal movement, which is for everybody interested in self-development, no matter what religion one belongs to. *Swadhyaya Parivar* has not publicly taken a stance against the riots. But its work in many people's lives is significant in helping them overcome any *a priori* hatred of other religions. *Bhavalaxi* is the new name given for the Scheduled Castes. The new term of recognition and self- and collective-aspiration are important in *Swadhyaya,* but they need to be accompanied by much more transformative strivings.

Swadhyaya has created a new relational revolution and, despite limitations, continues to inspire many to come together and share their time and labour for self-development and meaningful inter-subjective relations. It needs more transformative strivings, but it has its well-trenched identity which the leaders like to cling.

The self-study mobilisation of *Swadhyaya* could work on further transformation of self which would contribute to social and cultural transformation. The challenge here is transformation of the logic of sovereignty. In its various socio-cultural practices, such as *bhaktipheri,* nothing is done in *Swadhyaya* only individually; all activities are primarily co-operative in nature. Decisions are taken collectively after discussion and deliberation. If *Swadhyaya* could have adopted shared leadership, instead of supreme authority vested in one leader, it could have avoided power struggle and could have become a model for social transformation.

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Ananda Das Gupta: *Tea plantation in India: Towards sustainable development.* Kolkata: Gangchil, 2009, 142 pp., Rs 300 (hb) ISBN 978-81-89834-79-1

This slim volume presents the author's data on plantation labour in two main tea plantation regions in the country, namely, North India and South India. Although North India, comprising mainly West Bengal and Assam, constitutes the overwhelmingly larger region in terms of

production and labour force (both constituting about 80 per cent of the total), the conditions of labour are much worse than in South India. This is only as far as living conditions, health, and sanitation are concerned. As regards other indicators, such as education, the situation is abysmal in all regions.

In the introductory chapter the author gives a summary of the working and living conditions of plantation labour in West Bengal and Assam. The second chapter deals with similar issues in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The third chapter deals with some models of human resource development. The author has taken examples from the different plantations and also from the initiatives of the planters' associations such as Indian Tea Association and United Planters' Associations of South India. The fifth chapter – on industrial relations and the Plantation Labour Act (PLA) – is the best; in this chapter he makes a critical appraisal of PLA and also makes suggestions for improvement.

The concluding chapter is problematic: despite claiming to have undertaken a study on human resource development in tea plantations, the author makes generalisations without going into the issues. For example, he notes 'The Unions do not allow the promotion of a healthy work culture in the labour' (p. 123). Besides being grammatically incorrect sentence, it really amounts to generalisation. He states that the Left Front politics is responsible for this state of affairs. Is this the only reason? In other places he finds that employers are indifferent to labour's problems. However, he overlooks this aspect while making his generalisations.

The latter part of the concluding chapter has an interesting discussion on small growers and the 'bought leaf factories'. This is a comparatively new trend in tea industry in West Bengal and Assam, though the two southern states have a number of small tea-growers.

The book has useful information, but there are a lot of problems. It is poorly edited and there are repetitions in the chapters. The author could have paid more attention to language and editing of the manuscript. The title itself is incorrect (*Tea Plantation* instead of *Tea Plantations*). There are several *faux pas* in the text. I must add that I was amused to see that the very first paragraph of the opening chapter is a straight lift from my book on tea plantation labour (*Class Formation in the Plantation System*). I am told that plagiarism is also a form of flattery, but I did not expect it to be so blatant.

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Professor G.S. Ghurye Book Award

2009

The University of Mumbai is pleased to invite nominations for the Professor G.S. Ghurye Book Award for 2009. Books on Sociology or Anthropology written by an Indian author(s) and first published in India or abroad between 1 January and 31 December 2009 are eligible for consideration. The winner, to be decided by a Selection Committee, will receive a cash award and citation. Nominations should be by persons other than the author(s) and should include the names of author(s), book, and publisher. A copy of the book should be forwarded and nominations should be submitted by 15 April 2010 by post or email to

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7. Cite sentences or words taken from other works with single quotation marks; use double quotation marks only within quotations. Separate quotations exceeding fifty words from the text and indent them on the left. Unless the entire sentence is part of the quotation, the punctuation must remain outside the quotation marks.

8. Use British, rather than American, spellings (labour, not labor; programme, not program). Similarly, use 's', rather than 'z', in 'ise', 'ising', 'isation' words. Authors have latitude as regards italicisation, but italicisation needs to be consistent in the article.

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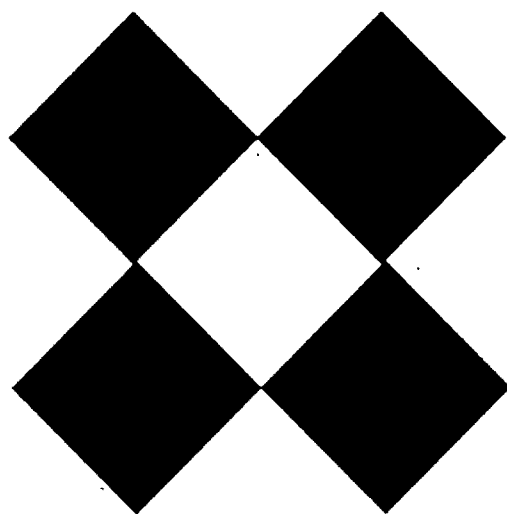
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SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN

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ARTICLES

DISCUSSION

BOOK REVIEWS

Voice of Illness and Voice of Medicine
in Doctor-Patient Interaction

Mathew George

This paper examines the interaction between doctors and patients in the process of fever care rendered by the allopathic hospitals of Kerala. Narrative analysis is used here, as it can present the meanings given by both the actors to a common event, namely, illness. It is argued that clinical interaction is not merely a two-way communication desired for exchange of information; rather, it is an outcome of the socialisation of doctors (thought styles) and patients (life world) about an event (illness) within their respective contexts. This is shown by analysing three clinical interactions in which varied voices in constant interaction were identified and which have a significant role in the process of medical care.

[Keywords: doctor-patient interaction; medicalisation; narrative; voice of illness; voice of medicine]

Medical care achieves its salience through the processes of diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up. These are usually accomplished by the active group-effort of doctors, patients, and other paramedical staff through health institutions. The roles played by doctors and patients become pivotal in the process of medical care. The role played by the patient cannot be seen merely as a recipient of medical care but as that of a partner in the total effort at curing the disease, as it is the patient (or her/his relatives) who first identifies the problem and seeks treatment. This becomes a necessary condition for the recovery of illness through medical care. Besides, the whole process of medical care that transforms a lay category of *illness* to a medical category of *disease* is facilitated through these interactions. In other words, doctor-patient interaction can provide an expert and a lay interpretation of the same event, which, in

turn, reveals the context and the reasons for these interpretations. The present paper is an attempt to show various voices in doctor-patient interactions in a clinic and thereby explaining these interactions as outcomes of the socialisation of actors involved.

Understanding Doctor-Patient Interaction

The interaction between doctors and patients becomes cardinal not only in the process of medical care, but also within the institution of medicine. It is through this interaction the basic components of medical care like diagnosis, prognosis, and therapeutics get accomplished. Additionally, this interaction can be seen as part of the whole process of medical care where both the actors are influenced by the changing medical knowledge. There are several approaches through which the interaction between doctors and patients can be examined. A brief overview of some of them will be attempted here thereby situating the approaches used for the present study in its context.

Scholars have attributed a passive role to patients, thereby expecting them to co-operate with the doctor in the process of medical care (Seal 1971). These studies mostly examine the gaps in the knowledge and understanding of patients about medicine with a view to rectify them by the process of socialisation of the patients to medical values and beliefs (medicalisation). Talcott Parsons' 'sick role' (1951) has been one of the dominant as well as influential approaches among sociologists which resulted in the acceptance of the physician's expertise in tackling illness as the key for doctor-patient interaction. This not only problematises illness but also considers bureaucracy in hospital as a feature manifested through doctor-patient interaction (see Mechanic 1976; Tuckett 1976). In all these, patients were not given sufficient attention, as the major role attributed to them was to help the physician in their maximum possible capacity in the collection of information about illness for rendering better care. Moreover, from a professional perspective, another stream of studies examined the temperament, attitude, and behaviour of doctors and patients and tried to link them to the socio-economic class of the respective actors, thereby showing conflict between them (see Friedson 1970/2001; Advani 1980). Besides, scholars have also examined the changing nature of role structures and behaviours among professionals and semi-professionals within a bureaucratic setting and linked these to the social characteristics of the actors (Oommen 1978).

Taking into consideration the varied roles played by doctors and patients, four models have been developed to understand the physician-patient relationship, namely, paternalistic, informative, interpretative, and

deliberative models (Emanuel and Emanuel 1992). As the term indicates, the *paternalistic* model assumes that the physician is an expert, similar to a priest, who knows what is best for the patient, who, in turn, will be thankful for such help. The *informative* model, also known as scientific engineering, is the process of translation of patient's values into facts through the mediation of the physician, the expert. The *interpretative* model, similar to that of a counsellor, helps the patient understand her/his priorities, thereby helping her/him in decision-making. The *deliberative* model proposes the possibility of negotiation where the physician, through dialogue, enables the patient to look at available options that aid final action. In all these approaches, the upper hand and expertise of the physician and the capability attributed to medicine are obvious.

The rise of the consumerist perspective, which considers medical care as a commodity and the right of the patient as that of a consumer, further attempts to empower the patient where the patient is expected to assert her/his needs and make her/him aware of the possible options. This could not go very far due to the patients' inability to enter into the expertise of medical knowledge, which plays an important role in the process of medical care decision-making. For H. Waitzkin (1979), this is only an outcome of a professional hegemony embedded in medicine prevalent in any society, whose intensity is greater in a capitalist society, which is capable of exerting social control that ultimately gets precipitated through the doctor-patient interaction.

The realisation of uncertainty within medicine (Fox 1957, 2000) has resulted in an approach that questions acceptance of physician's expertise in tackling illness. Here, diagnosis is seen as a practical approach that does not seek to pursue beyond the stage that predicts therapy and a theoretical approach that seeks to refine diagnosis to the limits of the possible (Mccormick 1979). Furthermore, the reasons people consult doctors are not always for diagnosis and treatment of disease, but also for getting reassurance about the meaning of symptoms, help with the problems of living, certification of sickness, and prevention of disease (*ibid.*). In this context, it will be farcical to understand doctor-patient interaction merely as a dyadic relationship. Instead, a contextual analysis that situates *doctors,* as the representation of the prevalent medical fraternity and *patients,* depending on the social strata to which one belongs, along with the prevalent cultural practices reflected in the type of *health institutions,* needs to be attempted (see Atkinson 1995; Good and Good 2000).

This can be a means for analysing how larger social and cultural processes are made relevant to the experience of patients, suggesting that clinical conversations are a form of traffic not only among doctors and

patients, but also among diverse local and global sites that produce biomedical knowledge, therapeutic technologies, and the scientific imaginary (Good and Good 2000). That is, consultation is the forum through which biomedical theory and scientific assumptions meet lay expressions of the experience of illness. In the encounter, the personal, social, and psychological contexts of sickness that are brought by the patient are translated by the physician into terms that are intelligible in biomedicine. This is accomplished here by analysing doctor-patient inter-action in its totality using *narrative analysis* whose basic assumptions and techniques is discussed in the following section.

Doctor-Patient Interaction as Narrative

The suitability of narrative analysis in clinical encounters is dealt by C. Mattingly: 'Narrative plays a central role in clinical work not only as a retrospective account of past events but as a form healers and patients actively seek to impose upon clinical time' (1994: 811). This becomes clear as (illness) narratives are extensively used to understand patients' representations and experiences of illness and to provide a temporal frame (clinical time) for therapeutic events. When the doctor-patient interaction is seen as a narrative, the scope of analysis widens, as it can be a tool to situate the physician and the patient in their socio-cultural milieu and a means of communication, whose further analysis provides the meaning given by both the actors to a common event, namely, illness. This is because narrative can be studied as a mode of discourse – as text or as performance: 'Narrative is used when we want to understand concrete events that require relating an inner world of desire and motive to an outer world of observable actions and states of affairs' (Mattingly and Garro 1994: 771).

Narrative thus makes it possible to understand not only the past experiences, but through that the present understanding of that experience and the future options perceived within the given socio-cultural context. As narrative is about experiences, it is through stories that narratives are produced where stories themselves are outcomes of experiences of the actors within their respective context (socialisation). The linkages between narrative and life stories have been dealt extensively by many scholars (see Frank 1995; Mattingly and Garro 2000). It is this narrative or life story that is further analysed by the researcher as a text based on her/his socio-cultural milieu.

The position of the researcher here is more of a 'passive' participant observer (Spradley 1980: 59-60), as the researcher neither has the first-hand experience of the illness patient suffers nor the expertise of the

physician with which the illness gets interpreted as disease. Thus, by taking the position of a bystander (witness), it is possible that the researcher would have internalised the problems of the patient better possibly due to greater familiarity with the patient and her/his context. Besides, not having the expertise of the doctor limits a complete under-standing of the physician's point of view. This would result in being more of a patient-centric perspective in the analysis. Thus, the model in which experience leading to narrative, narrative to text, and text further reshaping the experience is in itself inadequate, as the role of socialisation of the actors and the researcher in the formation of narrative and the text is not addressed. This inadequacy is tackled by introducing the concept of *institutions* at each juncture, that is, during translation of experience to narrative, narrative to text, and text further reshaping the experience. The concept of institutions used for this study is based on Jamie A. Saris' work about a schizophrenic patient (1995).

Institutions in Narrative

Saris (*ibid.*) addresses the above problem by elaborating *narrative*, or, in his terminology, 'the conditions of narrative production'. The translation of experience to narrative and narrative to text, according to Saris, is shaped by the institutions that are prevalent in each social context. The concept of institutions he puts forth encompasses the prevalent socio-cultural milieu. He defines institutions 'as bundles of technologies, narrative styles, modes of discourse, and as importantly, erasures and silences. Culturally and historically situated subjects produce and reproduce these knowledge, practices and silences as a condition of being within the orbit of the institution (*ibid.:* 42).

Saris elaborates *institutions* as helping to constitute stories as well as being sites of narrative productions, thereby problematising the relationship between experience and the development of the story about that experience (narrative) in such a way as to focus the analyst's attention on the specific circumstances of the social field in which narratives are developed and deployed. Moreover, narratives as text would ensure a thick description that would show a better picture of the social context in which the narrative is embedded (*ibid.*).

Unlike clock time or serial time, that follows one after the other, narratives follow narrative time where the time itself is dependent on the events explained with a beginning, middle, and end (plots). Mattingly (1994) has used the concept of narrative time and emplotment in the analysis of clinical interactions. For her, emplotment involves 'making a configuration in time, creating a whole out of a succession of events

(plots) (*ibid.*: 812). She elaborates that narrativity and, particularly, the work to create a plot out of a succession of actions, is of direct concern to the actor in the midst of action. Narrative analysis used in clinical interactions generates sufficient space for adequate understanding of the actors' (doctors' and patients') perspective about the illness and their future plans for the same. According to Mattingly,

> A narrative analysis offers a way to examine clinical life as a series of existential negotiations between clinicians and patients, ones that concern the meaning of illness, the place of therapy within an unfolding illness story, and the meaning of a life which must be remade in the face of serious illness (1994: 821).

It is this perspective of narrative – a narrative that is shaped by the *institutions* – that is used to analyze the doctor-patient interaction in the context of fever care rendered by allopathic health facilities in Kerala.

Voices of Interaction

In order to contextualise the doctor-patient interaction deploying narrative analysis, E.G. Mishler's concept of *voice* (2005: 320) is used. Mishler argues that

> Voice represents a particular assumption about the relationship between appearance, reality, and language or, more generally, a 'voice' represents a specific normative order. Some discourses are closed and continually reaffirm a single normative order; others are open and include different voices, one of which may interrupt another thus leading to the possibility of a new 'order' (*ibid.*).

Thus, it has to be understood that the idea of voice does not equate with a speaker. One speaker may articulate more than one voice; different speakers may share the same voice. Different voices distinguish contrasting orientations to the world and to the moral order as each voice realises a particular relationship between the speaker and the world. For Mishler (*ibid.*: 321), in clinical interaction, two different voices representing different normative orders can be identified: the *voice of medicine* and the *voice of the life-world*. He argues that, in the medical interview, the former dominates the latter. Occasionally, in this interview, the patient articulates the voice of life-world (based on her/his personal experiences and pre-occupations), but that gets overlooked by the voice of medicine. The whole clinical interaction then is seen as a struggle for dominance, the voice of life-world occasionally interrupting the voice of medicine (*ibid.*). The above approach of voice situates the

clinical interaction as a dynamic one where the power of the patient is also acknowledged by locating both the patient and the doctor within their socio-cultural context. Similarly, based on the narrative of a person diagnosed with schizophrenia, Saris (1995) shows how, at several junctures, the institutions of medicine and their categories lack insight in understanding and tackling the problems faced by the person due to the illness. He also shows how the institutionalised authority of professional expertise reflected in the power to name silences and erases other experiences and knowledge. The above approaches, based on discourse analysis, portray doctor-patient interaction as an everyday activity of human beings whose meaning becomes obvious on contextual analysis.

Voice(s) of Medicine

The above perspective is, however, limited, as it dichotomises the clinical encounter to only two voices, where the voice of medicine is seen as homogeneous. P. Atkinson (1995: 130-42), in his study among haematologists, shows how, within medicine, different voices are articulated and how they can be in conflict with each other. This he elaborates by analysing a situation in a haematology laboratory where the 'voice of experience' of a senior physician contradicts the 'voice of textbook medicine' of a student in a teaching hospital. This Atkinson views as a feature of medical work that can occur in any setting influencing medical practice. Furthermore, he explains that voice of medicine constitutes the *voice of experience* and *voice of science*. The voice of experience comprises accumulated experiences and a biographical warrant for knowledge and opinion. By voice of science, he means an articulation of knowledge warranted by an appeal to research, namely, published scientific papers as well as textual knowledge. Haematology laboratory is a place where the core of medical work is accomplished and is, therefore, considered as more 'scientific' in its proceedings. If contradictory voices are heard in such a setting, it is possible that heterogeneous and even contradictory voices can be heard in a doctor-patient interaction.

Based on Atkinson's and Mishler's insights on clinical encounter, I would like to argue that it is the voice of illness that can be heard along with the voice of medicine. This obviously would be based on the past experiences, perceptions, and worldview (life-world). In a medicalised society, it is possible that the voice of illness itself will be medicalised thereby articulating a *medicalised voice of illness*. Thus, there can be different voices that are in constant interaction in doctor-patient interaction: the voice of experience and the voice of science, together constituting the *voice of medicine* (Atkinson 1995), and the medicalised

voice of illness and life-world voice of illness (Mishler 2005) together constituting the *voice of illness*. Thus, for the analysis of doctor-patient interaction in fever care in Kerala, the following model will be used, as there can be voices of illness and voices of medicine: the *voice of illness* would be divided into *life-world voice of illness* and *medicalised voice of illness*, and the *voice of medicine* would be divided into *voice of science* and *voice of experience*. Most of these voices get articulated in a clinical interaction. An analysis of these voices will be carried out, as they have a bearing not only on the prevalent discourse, but also on the process of medical care. The above voices in themselves should not be seen as all-encompassing; there can be several other voices which may not fit into any of the above categories. Moreover, the dynamics of these various voices depend on the context of interaction and the actors involved.

The Study

The Context

In the state of Kerala, until the mid-1980s, fever, as a broad category, included viral fevers, common cold, runny nose, and similar other infections. Later, during the late-1990s, by the increased reporting of the number of cases of rat fever (leptospirosis), dengue fever, and viral fever, a threat about fevers was generated and the distinction between the types of fever became difficult. From 2002, every year during post-monsoon season, fever as a broad category has been taking its toll. It is at this juncture that the health minister of Kerala declared, in May 2004, the starting of 'fever clinics' in all district and taluk hospitals and major community health centres in the state. These clinics were expected to function as a separate division in the existing outpatient departments (*The Hindu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 25 May 2004).

As in any other context, it is possible that the meaning attached to 'fever' could be different for different people. It was found that fevers could be a symptom for clinicians and a state of ill-health for those affected, whereas for public health experts, it appeared to be an epidemic. Discussion with public health experts revealed that they had come to view the problem of fever as an epidemic. In fact, 'fever clinics' were set up by the health ministry as a response to the crisis of 'fever'. It is interesting to note how the concept of 'epidemic' gets constructed/ negotiated during a crisis, as in the case of dengue fever in Delhi (see Addlakha 2001) and cholera in Kolkata (see Ghosh and Coutinho 2000).

Fever talk, as mentioned before, implies the varied understandings about the illness, fever. This is based on the premise that the under-

standing and perception about fevers is determined by the discourses about disease and illness, health services, and so on, which is further determined by the various discourses on medicine prevalent in the society. Different groups, namely, those affected, clinicians, public health professionals, and so on will see illness/disease differently. This is obvious from the fact that, for each, the nature of interaction with the illness is varied and it influences their understanding of it and, therefore, their response to it. For individuals, whose lives are delimited by a combination of physical and social constraints and potentialities, there can be diverse perceptions of illness. For example, working and housing conditions and dietary habits and health customs impact on the health of working-class people as imperatively as physical entities such as viruses, genes, or environmental pollutants (Yardley 1997: 14).

The Data

The present paper is based on a larger study (George 2007) on the various facets of the problem of fever in Kerala of which ethnography of biomedical clinics was one component. The data for the study was collected during January–June 2005. All the respective authorities were informed about the study and necessary permissions were obtained. Consent from those patients and physicians who were part of the study were also ensured. The major tool to understand the culture of fever care was participant observation: the procedures involved in fever care were observed closely and the events of medical care were recorded (ethnography of the clinic) from the health facilities. Several semi-structured interviews were carried out as clarifications from doctors, patients, and other actors involved in the events. Moreover, the doctor-patient interaction during clinical encounter was recorded for a few cases on the spot giving due consideration to the context of interaction. This was later used as a text for analysing doctor-patient interactions and was subjected to narrative analysis (Czarniawska 2004). The process of clinical decision-making and the response of the patient were examined within the context and their respective influence on the outcome of fever care were analysed. Above all, follow up of each cases identified from the health facilities was done using household survey.

The data was collected in the local language (Malayalam) and was translated into English keeping in mind the original twists, turns, and the context. In the first stage of data analysis followed the holistic-content approach (see Leiblick *et al.* 1998). Later, for each case, John Heritage's approach of identifying institutions in interactions (2004) was used. Although institutions were identified almost 'everywhere' in the inter-

actions, they became obvious from the turns, sequences, lexical choices, and more importantly, epistemological and other forms of asymmetry (*ibid.*)

The Setting

The description of health facilities is inevitable at this juncture, as making explicit the field setting is the only way by which credibility of anthropological studies can be established (Sanjek 1990). Broadly, there are two functions involved in these hospitals: the administrative function and the medical function. The former comprises the process of registration leading to the making of a case record, which remains as the identity of those who seek care, and collection of cash as the price of the care rendered. The latter comprises the diagnosis accomplished through physical examination, history taking, laboratory investigations, and so on along with therapeutics. This function constituting the medical work will form my major focus.

The procedures for consultation is such that the doctor and the patient interact with each other the first time and, based on the patient's explanation, the doctor records the details of the illness in a particular format in the case record. Subsequently, the patient is subjected to physical examination and laboratory investigations, as the case may be, and thereafter asked to meet the doctor with the results of the tests and investigations. The doctor then prescribes medicines for a short period and asks the patient to come for a follow-up, if required. The extent of physical examination carried out, laboratory investigations prescribed, and prescription of medicine all depend on each case that calls for an analysis, taking into consideration the context as it is influenced by a range of factors.

Voice of Illness

Jincy Joseph, a 17-year-old girl studying in class XI, went to a practitioner in the hospital accompanied by her mother and a neighbour. She belongs to a middle-class family; her brother, working in the military service, is the major source of income for the family. Her parents are educated till the tenth standard and they run a small *pettikada* (a small shop-like structure where lemon juice, sweets, soda, chewing items, cigarettes, etc. are sold). The hospital they went to was a private hospital having over 300 beds with emergency and laboratory facilities, including biochemical tests. It has specialisations in general medicine, paediatrics, ENT (ear, nose, and throat), ophthalmology, orthopaedic, skin and VD

(venereal diseases), and others. The physician she consulted completed his medical degree from one of the leading medical colleges in the country and holds a masters degree in general medicine. He has been practising since 1972 and has been the physician in this hospital for the last eight years.

The patient along with her mother and neighbour entered the consulting room after completing the registration procedure of the hospital. The interaction[1] between the doctor and the patient (in Malayalam) proceeded as follows:

> 1D: *What is your illness?*
> P: *Fever, severe pain in the legs.*
> 1MoP: *Severe weakness and headache.*
> 2D: *Was there* swelling [in English]?
> 2MoP: *She is very weak and, at times, there is swelling on the side of the feet. Sometimes there is difficulty in breathing and back pain. Especially after coming back from the school ... she has to walk long distance ... she is very tired.*
> 3D: *Is it hereditary?*
> 3MoP: *No.*
> 4D: *Show your tongue, open your mouth. Is there recurrent throat pain or any other illness?*
> P: *Ahh!! No.*

The doctor physically examined the patient's mouth, abdomen (by pressing), and with the stethoscope. He then prescribed ECG (electrocardiograph) and routine blood and urine tests.

> 4MoP: *What is the disease, doctor?*
> 5D: *I need to see whether it is the initial stages of* arthritis [in English]. *Anyway let me have a look at the test results.*

The doctor then asked the patient to come on the next day.

On the second day, the doctor, after checking the laboratory test results said:

> lab test results are normal and the illness could be due to excess strain due to travelling. Medicines for swelling and weakness are written.

As the consultation ends, the patient collected the medicines from the pharmacy and left the hospital for home. A perusal of the medical case record showed that neither diagnosis nor symptoms were recorded. All the laboratory test results were within the normal ranges. During the follow-up of the patient at her home, a month later, it was found that she

continued to suffer from the illness. Moreover, it was discovered that, before going to the above hospital, steam inhalation had been done at home and thereafter she had been taken to a small clinic near her home for consultation; the doctor at the clinic had prescribed a tonic (a kind of syrup usually taken to resist weakness and enhance health). This clinic, run by a qualified allopathic doctor, had no facility for inpatient care, but had basic laboratory facilities.

During my conversation with the mother about the illness of her daughter, she said that

> [her daughter] *complains of weakness everyday and invariably goes to sleep as soon as she comes home from school. She is not able to study properly. She doesn't help me in any household work. She is very lazy and she complains of weakness ... as the illness was not subsiding and news of epidemic diseases made us think that the illness could be serious we decided to do a complete check-up in the highly-reputed private hospital.*

During the clinical interaction, it was obvious that the problem of weakness of the girl was not addressed adequately. Instead, the fact that the search for symptoms by the physician dominated the interaction was revealed by his question (2D). It has to be noted that, despite the expression of the problem by the mother (2MoP) based on her experience of her daughter's suffering, it got sidelined by the subsequent direct question of the physician (3D) on heredity. Thereafter, the physical examination portrays how the voice of medicine dominates the life-world voice of illness during the clinical interaction. It appears that the major purpose of the physician's consultation was to collect information regarding *medically acceptable illnesses*. In other words, the patient's mother presents the illness from the viewpoint of the abnormality of *social body* (Taussig 1980) by highlighting her daughter's problem as the inability to perform daily chores like travelling to school, studying her lessons, and helping in household work (2 MoP). The physician, on the other hand, first inquires about heredity to find some lead (3 D) on the abnormality of *biological body* (*ibid.*) reflected in the physical examination of the patient (4 D) and the prescription of laboratory investigations (5 D) for diagnosis. This leads to one-sided interaction: the patient becomes a mere object in the process of therapeutic care. The doctor's use of the English terms *swelling* and *arthritis*, despite there being popular Malayalam equivalents like *neeru* and *vaatham,* shows the intense urge of the physician to fit the patient's complaints (that are *lay* problems) into textual medical categories. In other words, this was the moment at which the translation of a lay category into medical category,

be it a symptom like 'swelling' or a suspected disease, namely, 'arthritis' occurred.

The above case also shows the management of *uncertainty* during clinical interactions when a valid diagnosis or symptoms are not identified. Despite this, medicines were prescribed. This is evident as, in the initial stage, the doctor expected the possibility of a hereditary factor (3D); next, before the laboratory test, he suggested the possibility of arthritis (5D); and he then concluded with observations about swelling and weakness, which was at the symptom level and devoid of any final disease diagnosis. In his study of haematologists, Atkinson (1995: 113-17) shows how uncertainty has become an important characteristic of contemporary biomedicine. He elaborates the relevance of close examination of the process of everyday medical work:

> It is necessary to pay rather close attention to how uncertainty or certainty is actually conveyed in the course of everyday medical work... There is need for detailed examination of how medical practitioners, students, scientists and others express and discuss their information how they voice their opinion and how they claim particular warrants for the knowledge and interpretations they endorse (*ibid.*: 17).

He points to the need to examine and understand the context of uncertainty or certainty and how these are accomplished in everyday medical work. The implications of the outcome have more to do with the question of the relation between knowledge and power. Rene C. Fox (2000) examines how doctors, as part of their medical training, get socialised to manage uncertainties at various levels of medical care, thereby internalising this ability as an achieved quality of the art.

Medicalised Voice and Voice(s) of Medicine

Ramachandran, a 31-year-old married man, a commerce graduate working in a private finance company went to a private hospital (the same as Jincy Joseph) with complaints of fever and body-pain. He belongs to a middle-class extended family comprising his parents, two younger brothers, and a younger sister. The physician he consulted was around 36 years of age, with a masters degree in general medicine. This physician has been practising for eight years of which seven years have been in the present hospital. The doctor-patient interaction during consultation proceeded as follows:

. 1D: *Uh, what is the problem?*
  1P: *Fever and body-pain.*

> 2D: *For how many days?*
> 2P: *Around two-three days.*
> 3D: *Was there vomiting present?*
> 3P: *No, there are rashes on the body.*
> 4D: *Take off your shirt and turn back* [Ramachandran's body was full of rashes].

The doctor carried out investigation using a stethoscope; he later examined the patient's mouth using a tongue depressant.

> 4P: [While examination was going on] *I have been taking medicine for jaundice. My serum bilirubin was tested from a nearby lab and the value was 1.1.*
> 5D: *Have you heard of measles?*
> 5P: *No.*
> 6D: *It is a* viral infection [in English] *and the* typical clinical symptoms [in English] *are shown.*
> 7D: *Getting admitted, aren't you?*
> 6P: *Yes.*

The patient got admitted, and routine blood tests were carried out. The platelet count was tested everyday until the third day when the patient was discharged from the hospital. At the time of discharge, medicine was prescribed for one more week. The patient was relieved of the illness only after ten days from the day of discharge. As per the medical record, the diagnosis was '*? Measles with URTI* [upper respiratory tract infection]'. On talking to the physician about fever care later, especially on the need for laboratory tests in diagnosis, he opined that '*All fever except viral fever need basic laboratory parameter support*'. He clarified, when asked about the platelet count and its relevance, that '*Unless and until platelet count becomes normal we cannot discharge a patient*'. During follow up at the patient's residence, the patient commented about the illness:

> *... as there was discoloration in urine together with body pain and rashes in the body, I checked serum bilirubin from a nearby lab and as the value was higher than the normal, I went to the hospital.*

In the above interaction, after the initial problem-identification session, the urge of the physician for the *medically relevant information* becomes clear, as it sidelined the patient's doubt (4P) about jaundice. The way the physician ensures/justifies his findings to himself is visible in his use of expressions like 'viral infection' and 'typical clinical symptoms' in English (6D). These are the textual terms that shape the

physician's *thought style* or *clinical mentality*. It appears that, in a society where English is neither the mother tongue nor the common language, the use of English terminology in clinical interaction has to be seen as the point at which the translation[2] of clinical presentations (patent's illness) to textual knowledge (medical categories) occurs. The moment the patient felt that the examination was over and before the doctor reaches a conclusion, the patient submits his analysis about the illness, by pointing to the fact that he is taking medicine for jaundice and his blood test shows an abnormal value (4P). Here, the fact that the patient associates serum bilirubin and its raised value to jaundice, which is logically possible, is a way of expressing his illness in medical terms. In other words this is the *medicalised voice of illness* that can be heard in many clinical interactions. These medicalised voices may or may not be relevant to the physician as contextual factors determine whether to associate rise in serum bilirubin to jaundice. The response of the physician may be either acceptance or rejection. In the above case, it is clear that the physician rejected the medicalised voice of the patient and supplanted it with authoritative *voice of medicine* – a voice of medicine in which the clinical diagnosis overrules the laboratory values of serum bilirubin, the latter provided by the patient's medicalised voice of illness. This is despite the fact that the physician is dependent more on laboratory tests for clinical diagnosis and for fever care as reflected in the physician's response to the need for laboratory tests (platelet count) in fever care.

The prevalence of dengue fever in the area might have possibly influenced the doctor to suspect the case as an instance of dengue fever, as reflected in his advice for admission and checking platelet count everyday till discharge from the hospital. This is because in cases of measles rarely are the patients admitted and their platelet count taken. In other words, the above case also shows how, during epidemics, *threat* and *medicalisation* influence each other forming a vicious circle that aggravates the process of medicalisation.

This medicalised voice of illness has to be seen as an outcome of the patients' past experiences with illness and the western medical system, resulting in a state which R. Crawford calls 'healthism and medicalisation of everyday life' (1980). He argues that

> Past therapeutic experiences and notions derived from diffused medical idea as well as reinforcing ideological premises of the society acquired by other means pre-structure the encounter (*therapeutic*). The client (*patient*) is already, in a sense 'professionalised'. In other words, persons being helped take on as their own some of their helpers' theorised assumptions and explanations (*ibid.*: 373).

In the above case, it is the medicalised voice of illness that was heard. This goes well with the argument that the patient's context offers a 'professionalised' outlook about her/his illness and everyday life. A similar but different phenomenon that occurs during clinical interaction is the genesis of new categories; this is shown in the following case.

Therapeutic Interaction: A Site of Knowledge Production

Saritha, a 21-year-old woman went to a Community Health Centre complaining fever, headache, and weakness. Her father accompanied her. She belongs to a lower-income-group and hails from an extended family. Her parents are daily-wage labourers, and there are two elder brothers, of which the eldest is married and has two children. Saritha occasionally works in the cashew factory depending on the availability of job. The Community Health Centre does not have regular laboratory test facilities; these tests have to be carried out at private laboratories situated on the premises. As there is overcrowding at the Centre, the duration of interaction was too short. The physician was a 52-year-old man. He has a basic medical degree with specialisation in child health; he has been practising for 25 years. The interaction between the doctor and the patient proceeded as follows:

> 1D: *What is the matter?*
> 1P: *Fever, headache and weakness in hands and feet.*
> 2D: *For how long?*
> 2P: *One week. Everybody in the house has this.*
> 3D: Vishapani *(poisonous fever)* is there, could be that, it is better to
>   *get admitted.*

The patient got admitted after getting the laboratory tests done. After four days, she was discharged with medicines prescribed for one more week. According to the doctor, the illness was 'viral fever'.

This case shows how, during doctor-patient interaction, certain kinds of information get internalised by the patient and how such information later forms a new category for the public. This was clear from what the patient said at her home during the follow-up visit:

> *The illness was* vishapani. *This is not like earlier ones. There is something poisonous that enters the body. That is why this is very severe.*

The doctor's version about this illness makes the picture complete:

> *...it is just viral fever. Since the patients won't understand it if we say 'viral' it is convenient if we use 'visham' (poison) instead of viral as the virus when it enters the body becomes poisonous.*

The fact that this was indeed a physician-created category, created ostensibly for patients who may not understand, was borne out by a number of other patients using the same category of *vishapani* to express their illness. One of the patients, who himself considered his illness as *vishapani,* when asked about it, responded by saying:

> ... *last time I came with symptoms of fever and body pain then the doctor said that this is* vishapani *– a new type of fever with severe symptoms.*

It is obvious that the context of doctor-patient interaction becomes a site of knowledge production, a knowledge that can determine the patient's understanding of and behaviour during illness.

Conclusion

This paper has been an attempt to show how doctor-patient interaction takes place in a clinical setting as part of fever care. The duration of interactions was very short and in local health institutions in which clinical interaction is minimal. The three cases describe clinical interaction in an Indian setting and how these interactions are outcomes of the socialisation of the actors involved. The clinical interaction is not merely the two-way communication desired for exchange of information; it is the product of the networks through which those actors involved are communicating. In other words, the interaction is the outcome of the socialisation of doctors and patients in their respective contexts. This is similar to the notion of *thought style* used by Fleck in the case of physicians (cited in de Camargo 2002) and *life-worlds* in the case of patients (Mishler 2005). It is in this context that the interactions between doctor and patient become the interaction of various voices, where voices themselves are representations of illness from various realms. L.J. Kirmayer deals with the real complexity of this interaction when he says that

> Doctor and patient are attempting to communicate, but their conversation is heavily constrained by the demands of the situation and their efforts to present an appropriate face to each other. Each speaks from a different position, which includes awareness of both the interactional context and its relationship to larger social spheres. Each speaks with the voice of the self but invokes the voice of others (2000: 169).

It has to be noted that the study was conducted in Kerala where recurrent epidemics and deaths due to various kinds of fevers were reported since the mid-1990s. The media reports and several control

programmes initiated in the state generated a pervasive feeling of threat among the public about fevers. In Jincy Joseph's case, it is clear that the problem the patient put forth is a social one: the patient and her mother tried to present the problem in terms of the patient's inability to perform everyday life activities. On the contrary, the doctor keenly searches for medically-valid findings that have physiological explanation. Two different notions about the same event are in fact the reflection of each of their lived experience and the respective role they perform. The doctor's aim is to settle the issue by a diagnostic and prescriptive act, whereas the patient's purpose is to seek relief.

Here, I would like to refer to the concept of *institution* advanced by Saris (1995) mentioned earlier. In the three cases, the manifestation of institutions is varied. In the first case, the threat about fever was the guiding force in the patient's understanding of her illness as reflected in her response towards treatment-seeking. In the second case, the patient articulated the medicalised voice of illness, showing the patient's dependence on western medicine in general and medical technology in particular, that ultimately reached a state of communicating illness in a language close to medicine. This de Camargo describes as 'how lay people rely on expert systems in every day life, meaning the myriad of technologies that we interact with on a daily basis without really having a firm grasp on how they work' (2002: 830).

The institutions with which the patient engages – the health institutions, the dominant discourse about fever in the society, one's own experience with illness – play an important role in the patient's under-standing of health, illness, and cure. This is obvious in the third case, where new category/knowledge (for instance, *vishapani*) is produced in a clinical setting which is part of neither medical knowledge nor lay knowledge. It is not possible to draw a general pattern from these inter-actions, but the meaning of illness/disease and, therefore, the outcome of medical care will be determined depending on the institutions prevalent in which clinical interactions occur and the actors involved.

Notes

1. Their interaction is denoted as follows: D – doctor (physician); P – patient; MoP – mother of the patient. The number indicates the order of interaction.

2. It is noteworthy that only few English terms are used during the whole clinical interaction. The medium of medical education being English, it is possible that physicians have internalised medical categories and terminology in English and are not concerned with translating them into Malayalam for the benefit of the patients or their relatives.

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Understanding Evacuation Behaviour in a Disaster Society: The Case of Coastal Orissa

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Based on data from field survey, this paper analyzes the dynamics of evacuation behaviour in the super-cyclone affected coastal Orissa. Particularly, it identifies the perceptions that motivate evacuation and factors that direct perceptual outcomes. It examines three variables – (i) warning systems, (ii) risk-perception formation, and (iii) risk level of the area – that have been found significant in research on evacuation of the victims. It underscores the importance of numerous variables responsible for evacuation, specifically the social psychological perception of risk and the social structural processes.

[Keywords: evacuation; Orissa; perception of risks; super-cyclone; warning systems]

Evacuation, the mass physical movement of people in a community, is a drastic preventive measure undertaken in response to a hazard warning (Quarantelli 1985). It is largely a function of people coming to define themselves as being in danger and perceiving that leaving their immediate environment is an appropriate action (Fitzpatrick and Mileti 1991). Although social scientists have tried to explain why some people hear and respond to warnings and subsequently evacuate and others are hesitant to do so (Lachman *et al.* 1961; Withey 1962; Williams 1964; Drabek 1969; Baker 1979; Perry *et al.* 1981; Ziegler *et al.* 1981; Perry and Greene 1982; Stalling 1984; Perry and Mushkatel 1984; Mileti and Sorenson 1988; Sorenson 1991), there has been very little research on the dynamics of human behaviour in evacuation. In a disaster situation, based on general observation, it is understood that all people do not evacuate simultaneously. Variations exist in when warnings are received

and the amount of time people spend deciding to evacuate, assembling family members and resources, and finally engaging in the act of leaving. This paper provides a basis for understanding the dynamics of evacuation behaviour in a disaster society, specifically in the super-cyclone affected coastal Orissa. In doing this, it focuses on three basic variables: (i) warning systems, (ii) risk-perception formation, and (iii) risk level of the area.

Warning System

Disaster warnings appear to be important in disaster preparedness. The objective of a warning system is to take precautionary action; warning provides the opportunity to people to prepare for the impact of a hazard. A.D. Crane says that

> the amount of warning possible varies considerably from just a few minutes for tornadoes, an hour or two for thunderstorm squalls and flash floods, a day or two for tropical cyclones, and up to a week or even much longer for floods in slow moving rivers in extensive flat terrain (1980: 47).

However, past disaster-warning experience suggests that 'the public warning disseminators usually proceed without sufficient knowledge or training in what information should be contained in public warnings, or the best means of delivery. The result is often an inadequately warned public and needless deaths and injuries' (UNDRO 1986: 35).

In order to improve disaster-warning messages, the information contained must include more than just technical information (*ibid.*). Appropriate attention must be given to information for the general public and to the success of messages in stimulating people to take appropriate action. It was found that personal warnings increased the rate of evacuation in a disaster society. Personal methods are easiest in small communities, but should not be discounted in larger communities too. Previous research indicates that effectiveness of technology from which the people received their first warning increased the rate of evacuation (see Rogers 1985).

Similarly, researchers have also attempted to understand the role of information channel used for the dissemination of emergency warnings. It is found that mass media are effective in some cases (Perry *et al.* 1982) and broadcast media of television and radio have been the prime source of hearing warnings (Turner 1983). In any case, the urgency or aggressiveness of the message can play an important role in affecting response (Baker 1991). Apart from that, community involvement also enhances hearing of the warnings (Scanlon and Frizzell 1979; Sorenson

and Gersmehl 1980; Turner *et al.* 1981; Perry and Greene 1982; Perry and Lindell 1986). Furthermore, interaction with relatives and kinship members before the disaster also help to receive the warnings positively and accurately (Turner *et al.* 1981; Perry and Greene 1982).

RiskPerception Sration

One of the most important factors influencing the decision to evacuate is perception of risk (UNDRO 1986). The more clearly people know that their lives are threatened by an event, the more likely they are to evacuate. The response to an evacuation order is an attempt to confirm the risk.

Generally, people are prepared or set to act on the basis of the meaning of the objects and there is no doubt that communication process plays a vital role in creating the accurate meaning. Research suggests that the communication process in issuing evacuation advertisements is the key to understand how people become motivated or engage in any protective action (Kunreuther 1978; Mileti *et al.* 1981; Turner *et al.* 1981). Here, the attachment of meaning to a message depends upon an individual's interpretation of the risk conveyed. The principle is, if people define a situation as real they will behave according to their definitions and that their actions will be real (Thomas and Thomas 1928). Thus, people behave in response to hazard warnings in general and evacuation advertisements in particular in ways consistent with their situational perceptions of risk. Evacuation behaviour is then driven by their definitions of the situation. Effectively, developing accurate perception of risk is significantly influenced by characteristics of the information presented as a motivational factor or stimulus to define a situation as risky enough to speed up evacuation process (Fitzpatrick and Mileti 1991).

RiskLevel of the Area

The physical hazardousness of a person's residence and the proximity to the potential impact site enhances evacuation rates (Mileti *et al.* 1975). Low-lying sites exposed to open water are more dangerous than sites at higher elevations. Generally, high-risk sites are open coast lines with elevations less than 3 m above mean-sea-level and low-risk sites are usually protected mainland, which is over 4.5 to 6 m in elevation, where as moderate-risk sites are protected mainland but no more than 3 to 4.5 m high, often flood prone and also cyclone prone (Baker 1991). In this way, residents who feel unsafe to stay during the storm tend to leave, whereas

those who feel safe in their area tend to stay. For example, Earl J. Baker (1985), in his study of hurricane Diana,[1] found that the highest percentage of the North Carolina residents who evacuated did so because they were convinced that the storm would strike their area. Usually, residents of high-risk areas are aware of the damage to their locations and, in the same way, the public officials also pay greater attention to evacuate the residents of those areas because of the hazardousness of the locations. Similarly, in their study, Jasmin K. Riad *et al.* (1999) found that people from low-risk areas did not evacuate because they could not feel any real danger.

Thus, one can see various themes in the literature on evacuation behaviour. Though public evacuation has been well researched from a variety of practical and theoretical perspectives, much remains to be learned about the complex and bewildering nature of this phenomenon. Empirically, evacuation behaviour is a difficult concept to measure and study, though some cases are clearer than others. For instance, reviewing the hurricane-response literature and attempting to explain inconsistencies and patterns within it suggests cautions in studying other hazards and in developing more general evacuation behaviour models (Baker 1991). So, Quarantelli (1984) recognised the most important issue related to evacuation research when he pointed out that many of the ideas in this area are barely at the level of educated guess. Empirical research related to conceptual model is very rare. Quarantelli reminded that many studies are based on small samples and major published works have not been considered for peer review.

It is in this context that the present study was undertaken as an effort to model individual variations in warning receipt and evacuation departures in the super-cyclone affected coastal Orissa. The study was designed to answer three questions: (i) How did the victims attempt to confirm the warning? (ii) How did they evacuate from the threatened area? (iii) How can we better understand the evacuation behaviour in a disaster-affected society?

Super-Cyclone and its Characteristics

The super-cyclone[2] had four characteristics.[3] Firstly, it was a rare occurrence and it also remained anchored over land after hitting the coast for an unusually long period, causing heavy rainfall and consequent massive inland flooding. In contrast to typical cyclones, the super-cyclone was accompanied by high tidal surge, which was so sudden and ferocious that many survivors were unable to recall their ordeal with exactness at that particular time. Secondly, it is estimated that up to 15

million people (more than 2 million households) are seriously affected by the cyclone one way or another and the official number of deaths is reported to be 9,893 and many more are feared to have died (Parida 2002). Millions of people were left homeless. The affected villages mostly consist of simple huts, which were severely damaged or totally destroyed. Thirdly, the state administration completely failed to mobilise itself on time and could not utilise the forewarning provided by the India Meteorological Department, resulting in the heavy human toll. Fourthly, the super-cyclone struck a populace with little prior experience or 'disaster culture' (see Anderson 1965). People did not take the cyclone warning seriously. To many residents, these warnings simply meant another false alarm.

Methodology

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, basic information on how households and rural communities respond to evacuation was gathered from Jagatsinghpur district forming a part of coastal Orissa. The area is characterised by fragile environment, prone to flood and cyclone, low and highly variable rainfall, high water deficiency, frequent rainfall failure, and, of late, as an emerging drought-prone district. It is inter-sected by a network of rivers and creeks, with Bay of Bengal on the eastern side making it flood prone. This is also one of the worst cyclone-affected districts in Orissa. Ersama block, a part of Jagatsinghpur district, was purposively chosen because of its proximity to sea and high degree of vulnerability to super-cyclone. This block is vulnerable to a number of other natural hazards, particularly flooding, both from the rivers and storm surges in the Bay of Bengal. Two sample villages Dhinkia and Narendrapur from Ersama block were selected randomly. Within each village, the first household in the sample was selected at random, and subsequent households entered the sample through the use of an increment number. Of the 570 endangered population for whom evacuation was at least suggested in the studied area, 399 (70%) did not evacuate and 171 (30%) did. Of the 399 people who did not evacuate, we have purposively selected 208 respondents from 91 households. Similarly, of the 171 people who have evacuated the place, 88 respondents from 32 households have been selected. Within the households, the respondents were selected for interviewing in such a way as to satisfy the gender and age characteristics of the sampling universe.

Fieldwork began in Ersama three months after the super-cyclone disaster. The survey focused on questions about the warning and evacuation experiences of people. Sample strata was divided on the basis

of the Socio-Economic Status (SES) (high, medium and low), age (18-30, 31-40, 41 and older), gender, and caste (upper caste and lower caste). The SES estimation was accomplished through direct observation of the extent and quality of the rural facilities including their education and household facades, as well as dwelling sizes, services and type of construction. The population sampled was persons 18-year old and older who resided in Ersama at the time of the impact and also before the occurrence of the disaster. The sample was almost equally divided into males (52.8%) and females (47.2%). More than two-thirds (68%) of the respondents were married, while about one-fifth (22.1%) were single; very few respondents were either divorced (3.2%) or widowed (6.7%). The average size of the household was 4.97 persons (range 1-21). Nearly, 92 per cent of the female respondents were housewives. More than 88 per cent of the male respondents were agricultural labourers, farmers, fishermen, and landless labourers. More than two-thirds (69%) of the respondents were from the lower castes.

The interview schedule included both open- and close-end questions about socio-economic and demographic information and the concerns of the respondents regarding their warning process and evacuation activities. Information on household activities during normal and calamity seasons was also collected from the households. Simple and unstructured questions, supplemented by group interviews and discussions have provided additional insights on the survey data. To predict the evacuation behaviour, a linear regression analysis was developed. The regression analysis affords a basis for ranking the independent variable relative to its importance in explaining variance in the dependent variable. This is accomplished by examining the standardised coefficients, usually called betas. While beta coefficients are not a measure of explained variance, one can compare their relative magnitudes to rank-order the independent variables (Berry and Feldman 1985).

Decision Making abut Evacuation

Reasons for Non-Evacuation

The respondents were offered a variety of reasons for non-evacuation (see Table 1). However, categorically, reasons such as (a) perceptions of risk, (b) warning systems, (c) social support resources, and (d) evacuation intention are very important to discuss here.

Data show that risk-perception formation was an important factor which made most of the coastal residents to decide not to evacuate during the super-cyclone threat. The beta coefficient of -.575 for this

Table 1: Predicting Non-Evacuation Behaviour

Reasons	Per cent	Beta	Standard Error	R Square
1. Perception of risks	31.7	-.575*	.033	
2. Warning system	20.7	-.486*	.039	
3. Social support resources	16.8	-.447*	.044	
4. Evacuation intention	16.3	-.444*	.042	.557
5. Risk level of the area	4.3	-.093**	.049	
6. Access to resources	4.3	-.234*	.049	
7. Fear of looters	2.4	-.178*	.064	
8. Others	3.4	-.225*	.046	
Total	100			

Note: * P<0.001, **P<0.05

variable is an indication that the evacuation rate is likely to decline strongly with the least perception of risks by the endangered population. The respondents opined that, when they heard the emergency information, initially they tried to form an understanding of what was said, and based on their belief in what was said followed by warning confirmation process, the decision about evacuation was taken. However, most of them could not confirm the risk; hence, there was no evacuation. When asked about the perceptual components, all most all who believed in risk-formation process said that it included forming an understanding of what was heard, ascription of belief, and personalisation of the message to make the risk relevant. In addition, the respondents also pointed out that the information presented (through various sources) in their area could not bring stimulus or motivation to make people engage in the process of risk-perception formation about the super-cyclone. Thus, stimuli (conflicting messages), lack of risk-perception formation, and negative attitude towards the risk became the basis of non-evacuation.

The warning systems, particularly the information channel and the quality of information used for the dissemination of emergency, have a definite effect on lack of evacuation rates. The beta coefficient of -.486 for the variable 'warning systems' suggests that the evacuation rates were significantly lower for those who could not hear the evacuation advice and confirm it than those who did. Majority of the individuals could not confirm the warning because they found several internal inconsistencies. The official forecast that tidal waves of 10 m height would be experienced during the cyclone is a case in point. Does this forecast inform people how far such tidal waves will inundate the land or how far from the sea would be a safe distance? How does a person, who

is living far inland from the coast, say, at a distance of 10 km from the sea, decide to evacuate on the basis of such warning? Moreover, during the super-cyclone, storm surge went at the level of 25 km inland; people who were staying in those areas were completely unprepared to face the danger. It was also found that those who heard the warning from neighbourhood association and their relatives were more likely to evacuate than those who did not. So, the conclusion seems apparent that effective warning system is an important mechanism for evacuating the threatened area.

The officials managing the warning system said that, in our country, only minimal efforts have been made to establish effective systems for the detection, evaluation, and prediction of hazardous situations. In their view, the related sciences are still evolving; the new technologies are extremely expensive. Therefore, the government must take significant steps to improve the capability of accurate identification, evaluation, and prediction of natural hazards. Moreover, these officials also admitted that the communication method and dissemination network could have been more effective in the super-cyclone disaster. Repeated warnings without any hazardous situations, long before the super-cyclone, caused people to be less willing to take precautions.

The data also reveal that lack of social support resources is likely to influence the decision to evacuate, as the beta coefficient of -.447 for the variable 'social support resources' indicates: the fewer the amount of social support resources, the less is the evacuation result. Social support resources are 'those social interactions or relationships that provide individuals with actual assistance or that embed individuals within a social system believed to provide love, caring, or sense of attachment to a valued social group or dyad' (Hobfoll 1988: 121). It is evident that a sense of belonging is extremely important for emotional health and well-being, particularly before the disaster. Victims – such as agricultural labourers, farmers, fishermen, landless labourers, and importantly the migrant labourers from other states – who did not receive the provision of basic life support needs, security, and psychological and social support were not interested to evacuate. Thus, it can be said that disasters are most often due to the result of 'human condition', particularly the social processes and social structures that contribute to increasing societies' vulnerability to disaster.

The data show that evacuation planning is directly related to the behavioural intention of the group that perceives itself at risk. It is found that intended behaviour is the best indicator of actual behaviour which is needed for evacuating a place. The beta coefficient of -.444 for the variable 'evacuation intention' specifically indicates that as the intended

behaviour of the victim lessens, the rate of evacuation decreases significantly. One interesting finding related to evacuation intention in this study is that it is directly related to the victim's past disaster experience. Past disaster experience, that is, prior experience of having lived through a disaster and having received warnings that did not develop into hazardous situations, tends to result in a less cautious reaction about the threatened danger. Most of the respondents felt that, like previous cyclones, this time also the devastating effects would be not serious. They cited the example of Ganjam cyclone:[4] though its intensity was less, the warning messages were the same as in the super-cyclone.

The beta coefficient of -.093 for the variable 'risk level of the area' reflects that there is no direct relation between evacuating a place and knowing the risk level of the area. Victims never believed that their place will be affected, as they never experienced the risk earlier. Moreover, those residents, who had the idea about the location of their place, were also proved wrong when storm surge entered their houses.[5] Thus, the question of hazardousness of a person's residence and the proximity to the potential impact site was out of context for the super-cyclone victims. In this way, the hypothesis that evacuation behaviour is directly linked with knowing the risk level of the area of the victim's house is rejected.

Reasons for Evacuation

As shown in Table 2, the single best predictor for evacuation was the victims' perception of the risk; the beta coefficient for this variable is .565. Particularly, the respondents who had serious concern for disaster risk said that they perceived the severity of the threat (for example, felt super-cyclone to be a threat) and susceptibility (for example, having children under age of less than 8). It was also found that adults with dependants were more likely to perceive the threat than adults without dependants. Specifically, women with young children who were alone in the household at the time of first evacuation warning were more eager to evacuate. Some women narrated:

> We are more vulnerable during all types of disasters because we have less access to resources. We are the victims of the gendered division of labour. In spite of this, we are always concerned for our children. Our past disaster experiences show that floods and tidal waves are uncertain and sudden in our areas. Therefore, it's better to take precaution by evacuating the place.

Overall, the evidence indicates that women analyze decisions more than men. Generally, women spend much more time than men in analyzing the past, present and future (Parida 2007). They were more likely to

Table 2: Predicting Evacuation Behaviour

Reasons	Per cent	Beta	Standard Error	R Square
1. Perceived the risk	27.27	.565*	.011	
2. Social support resources	23.86	.529*	.012	
3. Social status	20.45	.497*	.012	
4. Direction of household	17.04	.454*	.014	.910
5. Warning system	4.54	.233*	.044	
6. Others	6.84	.274*	.031	
Total	100			

Note: * P<0.001

overanalyze problems before making a decision and rehash the decision once it was made. Moreover, the families that stayed together at the time of warnings could make evacuation decisions properly through perception of risks in consideration of other family members. Thus, as R.W. Perry and M.K. Lindell observe, idea of family considerations in perception of risks when they said 'it has long been known that families tend to evacuate as units and that the separation of family members often involves anxiety and attempts by evacuees to reunite families' (1980: 45).

The data emphasise direct link between the social support resources and intention to evacuate. The beta coefficient of .529 for this variable shows that social-support resources strongly facilitate evacuation as well as access to information. It was found that high percentage of evacuees fled to the homes of relatives rather than to cyclone shelters. In this present study, perceived social support is considered a resource and not a social influence. Network size, for instance, saying hello, *namaskar*, or how are you is very different from the perceived availability of social support, for example, borrowing money or having a place to stay. Thus, mere contact with other people is not that much important as the resources they provide.

The data also reveal that the decision to evacuate is directly influenced by the social status of the head of the household; the beta coefficient for this variable is of .497. Families in which the head of household has completed twelve or more years of formal education are more likely to evacuate than households where the head has fewer than twelve years of education. Thus, it is reasonable to argue that households with high social status, particularly education, are more likely to be concerned about safety than those with low educational status. This indicator also indirectly influences intention to evacuate through perception of risk.

People who resided north and south of the sea were more disposed to evacuate than those who lived in the west. The beta coefficient of .454 for the variable 'direction of household' shows that the direction of a household's residence from the sea is likely to have direct influence on the decision to evacuate. Here, knowledge about the local environment and population distribution played a significant role in the decision-making process. It can also be noted that people who resided north and south of the sea were strictly warned by the official to leave. Some educated people from these areas were in direct touch with the officials. Certainly, the educated people felt the reality of the danger as a result of which they could motivate others to evacuate the threatened area. Thus, social status in the form of education facilitates a better understanding to realise the locational factors which significantly help people to take evacuation action. In sum, the results of the linear regression analyses of the survey data give strong empirical support to categorise reasons that are responsible for evacuation decision making process.

Process of Evacuation

In the process of evacuation, it is also necessary to know certain situational variables people experienced in the Orissa super-cyclone. It was found that people considered realising important factors such as the timing of evacuation, and the availability of transportation and evacuation shelters very urgently after perceiving the risk. Firstly, timing is a significant constraint in fast onset events (Anderson 1964; Drabek 1969; Gruntfest 1978; Perry *et al.* 1981; Graham and Brown 1983). Time availability refers to the length of time between the detection of a hazard and the manifestation of impacts or effects (Sorenson and Mileti 1987). Secondly, transportation is an essential emergency service, which has been largely unaddressed by disaster researchers. Thirdly, knowledge about where to evacuate is vital at the emergency time. Generally, people are advised to go to the cyclone shelters. However, the cyclone shelters are limited, cramped, crowded, noisy, and stuffy. People handle stressful situations differently, and some will appear to be nervous or agitated. There will be long lines to restrooms and not much privacy. In sum, the evacuation decision-making process also incorporates intention to depart as a result of the above three important factors. In view of the above foregoing discussion, let's evaluate various situational assessments that ensured evacuation process in the super-cyclone affected coastal Orissa.

Timing of Evacuation

In the study area, the Indian Meteorological Department, which has a separate division for cyclone warning, had warned about the direction, the intensity, and the path of the wind speeds. The department had sounded warnings on All India Radio and Door Darshan at around 6 p.m. on 27 October 1999. Some officials even visited the threatened area and warned the people to evacuate. However, super-cyclone struck only at 10 a.m. on 29 October. The study found that early evacuation can be attributed to an acute perception of the disaster and the quick onset of the disaster. Due to the late onset of the super-cyclone, most people could not perceive the danger correctly and therefore, delayed their journey until they faced the seriousness of the situation. Furthermore, those respondents who were present at home when the warning was issued were more likely to evacuate earlier than those who were not present at home. Therefore, it is to be expected that the timing of evacuation is influenced by quick onset of the event and the place a person is located when the threat is perceived. Some respondents narrated that:

> The timing of evacuation was not clearly mentioned by the official. They said so many things to different people. Initially the official told us to leave the place within ten hours of the warnings. However, after six hours again they came and told us to leave after nine hours from the second warning. We have economic, psychological and emotional attachment to our dwellings, huts, and assets. One must understand how the livelihood of the poor like us is attached to our small assets, landed property, cattle, and other resources because of which we could not leave the place of dwelling immediately. Moreover, we were not sure that there is really a danger coming which needed evacuation. We could not know where to go and how to go with our family members. Everything was quite confusing to all of us. Therefore, we thought it is better to stay inside our house.

Availablity of Transportation

In rural Orissa, the public transportation system and the quality of roads are undeveloped. Even on a normal day, people wait for several hours in the bus stand to catch busses. Due to poor quality of roads, various vehicles take several hours to reach the nearest town. At the time of warning, the officials recommended that the residents of the threatened areas should walk or use some official transportation to go to public shelters. We found that 32 per cent of the respondents preferred to use their own cycles and bullock carts to evacuate, and only 16 per cent went to the public shelter on the trucks sent by the officials. Fifty-two per cent

of the respondents walked to different places for taking rest. Regarding the road and transportation facilities, following opinions were obtained from the respondents:

> The condition of roads has been very critical in our area. A particular bus or vehicle takes at least half an hour to reach a minimum of 5 km distance. Problems of maintenance of roads are compounded when it is unclear where the institutional responsibility for rural roads lies. Regular maintenance is often neglected both because of lack of funds and because there is little political capital in carrying out minor maintenance; major rehabilitations would be authorised once the road has deteriorated very much, making it difficult to maintain a guaranteed level of access. Thus, in this particular condition, when cyclone or flood strikes, it becomes very difficult to leave the place immediately by any vehicle or even by walking.

Hence, quality roads and proper transportation facilities are very critical enabling factors for motivating the people to evacuate during the emergency period. This factor has not been given sufficient attention in earlier research on the subject.

Evacuation Shelter

In coastal Orissa, the urgency of cyclone shelter was not felt seriously before the hazard. For instance, during the super-cyclone, there were only 23 cyclone shelters in the entire state, each with a maximum capacity of 1,000 people and many were constructed a decade ago and were never used (Dash, 2002). Therefore, home of relatives and friends were the preferred evacuation shelters among the evacuees. Majority of evacuees were staying with their relatives and friends. Due to limited cyclone shelter, only 19 per cent people could manage to adjust. Other studies report similar findings. With reference to the Yuba City (California) flood, W. Stiles (1957) reported that only about 20 per cent of the people who evacuated actually reported to the Red Cross shelters. Likewise, Harry Estill Moore (1963) found that 58 per cent of the people who were evacuated in response to hurricane Carla went to the homes of friends and relatives, rather than to official shelters. While some investigators have interpreted these findings to indicate that public shelters are less necessary, it can be emphasised here that the research literature is by no means entirely consistent with regard to evacuees' utilisation of public shelters. Even if many evacuees seek help from friends and relatives, there still remain substantial numbers who depend upon public shelters. Significantly, some people in the study area pointed out that

Cyclone shelters should be constructed in such sites which could be easily accessible by all, including women, children, and old. Such buildings should be multi-purpose, so that these are used for schools and other community development purpose in other seasons. Now onwards, we have to take care of these buildings properly and all of us have to treat them as our own property. To put it simply, only cyclone shelters can save our lives from the hazards.

The study found that those few persons who evacuated initially to the cyclone shelters were likely to be the most concerned about the safety of their lives, even if some of them had 'concrete' houses. Furthermore, those who were accommodated in their relatives' or friends' houses were inclined to remain as close to home as possible, because most of them were concerned about the safety of their homes and property. Therefore, other than saving life, concern about looting and safety of the property are also important factors related to evacuation behaviour.

In the process of examining various predictors of evacuation in coastal Orissa, it was also found that caste was not a significant factor in explaining evacuation compliance during the emergency period, though it was very much rigid before the disaster. The entire approach here can be linked to the 'Emergent Norm Theory'[6] advanced by R.H. Turner and L.M. Killian (1987): we found the presence of heterogeneous actors with different backgrounds, perceptual abilities, and motives about what is going on, what should be done to respond to the crisis. In this way, it also offers a symbolic interactionist[7] explanation of collective behaviour. People in the super-cyclone looked to others for help irrespective of their caste background. However, it was found that an individual's class was a basis to set the networks in the community. The greater one's contacts and ties to the community, the more likely was one to receive information regarding a recommendation or support of resources to evacuate. Therefore, even if some one was from lower caste but had sound economic resources (class), it was very much easy for him to be motivated by the relatives.

The point here is that caste did not make any impact on developing the networking in a true sense in the particular community; rather it was the class which influenced significantly to create the meaningful social ties by helping the relatives financially and psychologically at the time of disaster. Thus, one of the findings of this research is that disasters are part of the social processes. They are not random or equal probability events; they are, instead, the result of existing social and economic conditions. These discussions are grounded in a 'socio-economic and political' perspective (see Peacock *et al.* 1997), highlighting how social and economic inequality contributes to increasing the vulnerability

among certain segments of the population. Thus, the present evacuation research is not only a discussion about disasters, but also about social processes and social structures.

Discussion

The present study has both strengths and weaknesses. It has a large heterogeneous sample – which included substantial percentage of women, older people, lower castes – and included various socio-economic indices. These are the study's strengths. The major weakness of the study is that it is based on self-report and the interviews were conducted after three months of the event. This weakness is very usual in disaster research; therefore, future research should attempt to overcome them by studying communities before as well as after evacuation orders have been proclaimed. Moreover, because of the under-representation of the very poor, estimates of the impact of the hazard presented in this study are very conservative. Indeed, super-cyclone had an enormous impact on the life circumstances of very poor people. Within the limitations, the present study has identified a number of variables that relate with evacuation rates.

The super-cyclone presented the fact that, after warning dissemination, those who received warnings interacted with one another in an effort to determine collectively whether the warning was authentic, whether it applied to them, whether they were indeed personally in danger, whether they could reduce their vulnerability through action, and so on. When people engaged in interaction, they could perceive the danger easily and hence evacuate. Thus, interpretations of the risk, if made soundly and collectively, can facilitate the evacuation process; otherwise, they can bring doubt in the system and give rise to faulty decisions.

As Harry B. Williams suggests, disaster warnings should be viewed as processes and, as such, must include a coping element, that is, not only information about the existence of danger, but also advice as to '… what can be done to prevent, avoid, or minimize the danger' (1964: 80). By and large, such information was not transmitted in the super-cyclone affected coastal Orissa except in the vaguest terms, for instance, 'leave for high ground, that is 10 m above the sea level'. Assessment of the adequacy of such information is an important aspect of anticipating the consequences of disaster warning. Thus, it is evident that the quality of forewarning becomes essential because only meaningful and specific warnings can lead to successful evacuation of a large population. The 1999 super-cyclone exposed the deficiency of cyclone warning in this

aspect. 'The Indian Meteorological Department had detected, tracked and monitored the cyclone right from its low-pressure stage but could not utilise the information it had gathered to prevent loss of life' (Dash 2002: 4271). On the one hand, the threatened population, which was largely unfamiliar with such events received warnings in a variety of different contexts, on the other hand, the endangered population found the warning totally irrelevant at a time when they were desperately searching for specific information in order to assess the level of the threat posed to them and to decide on evacuation. For instance, before evacuating, people required vital information such as whether they were individually at risk and whether the storm surge would reach their village and affect their houses. Unfortunately, the warnings provided did not help them at all in these respects, except perhaps to make them aware that there was a threat.

The findings demonstrated that people in communities which had experienced previous cyclones evacuated in greater numbers than people in communities which had not experienced a major cyclone recently. People were asked whether they had any kind of previous disaster experience, any kind of previous cyclone experience, how many cyclones they had experienced, how recently they had experienced a cyclone, how severe was the cyclone they experienced, how much property damage they had experienced in cyclones, and whether any family member had ever been injured in a cyclone. From a behavioural perspective, it was found that past disaster experience in general and prior evacuation experience in particular made effective understanding because people who knew about the threat of the disaster or who had evacuated earlier knew how to act and what to do. In the case of super-cyclone, people imagined that an impending hazardous event would materialise in a way much like those that had already been experienced, therefore, less evacuation. Thus, experienced people[8] in the villages could not accurately perceive the hazard of the impending event. We can say that, when the risk perceptions are extremely biased, people do not respond to an evacuation warnings properly.

In this way, public response to evacuation behaviour is a direct consequences of perceived risk (understanding, belief, and personalisation), the warning information received (specificity, consistency, certainty, clarity, channel, frequency, source, and so on), personal characteristics of warning recipient (knowledge, experience, resources, social network, and so on), and the situational variables considered at the time of disaster (timing of the disaster and availability of transportation as well as cyclone centres).

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the preceding analyses and discussion that, by and large, evacuation behaviour is a decision-making system. It is people's perception of a risk or situation as well as the organisation of society and economic and political arrangements that become the basis of the evacuation behaviour. In this context, one can clearly see the interdependencies of social, economic, technological, and transportation networks increase the vulnerability to disasters and have the potential for generating serious events. Usually, people think and reason before they act. Therefore, an understanding of how people make decisions during an emergency can be helpful in explaining and predicting their behaviour.

Like the present study, several studies have shown that lives can be saved, even in the face of tremendous property loss, when people in the threatened area receive effective and advanced warning of the impending disaster (Quarantelli 1982). However, it is important that people should develop appropriate perceptions of risks and avoid confusing the various warnings. For this, not only people must be warned in advance of the disaster, they must also respond to the warning in an appropriate and timely manner. However, it is obvious that evacuation behaviour is much more complex than the initial explanation reveals. This research has demonstrated that within a selected area one can find various complexities. Moreover, if we consider cross-national comparisons, undoubtedly the complexity may grow exponentially.

Notes

1. Hurricane Diana was the strongest storm of the 1984 Atlantic hurricane season, and the first major hurricane to hit the US East Coast in nearly 20 years. With Category 4 winds of 216 km, Diana threatened to become the most intense hurricane to strike North Carolina since 1954 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Diana_[1984]) (accessed in July 2007).
2. On 28 October 1999 night a low-pressure system, named 'Cyclone 05B', intensified further and was classified as a 'super-cyclone' by the Indian Meteorological Department with wind speeds exceeding 222 km/h). Rated as one of the worst storms to hit the Indian coast ever, the super-cyclone surpassed the tragedy of the 1977 cyclone that struck the state of Andhra Pradesh, both in terms of loss of lives and damage to property.
3. Future disaster research needs to pay greater attention to the specification of types of events in analytical terms rather than just using such labels as cyclones, hurricanes, tornadoes, and the like (see Janis 1954).

4. Thirteen days before the 29 October 1999 super-cyclone, a lower intensity cyclone hit the South Orissa's Ganjam district (see Parida 2002).
5. At the time of warnings, the officials had announced that, if height of the place is more than 10 m above mean sea level, it will not be affected by the storm surge created by the cyclone.
6. According to the Emergency Norm Theory, the crisis creates a sense of uncertainty and urgency forcing people to act even as they create meaning through symbolic interaction processes. They interact and create a new, emergent normative structure that guides their behaviour.
7. It uses concepts such as the 'definition of the situation' developed by W.I. Thomas and premises outlined by H. Blumer. For a discussion on the symbolic interactionist background of the Emergency Norm Theory, see McPhail (1991: 61-102).
8. 'Experienced people' here refers to those who have experienced previous cyclones and, therefore, can compare various warning processes.

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Democratic Centralism, Party Hegemony, and Decentralisation in West Bengal*

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This paper raises two questions. (1) How does one explain the massive mandate given to the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front on industrialisation in the West Bengal assembly elections of 2006 receiving a setback from the same electorate in panchayat elections of 2008, just two years later? (2) Did the primary contradiction lie between the practice of rigid democratic centralism of the Community Party of India (Marxist) and the logic of democratic devolution of power of the panchayati raj institutions, or between agriculture and industry in a predominantly small peasant economy? It is argued that the primary contradiction lay in the pervasive political oppression of the hegemon, in the manner in which land was acquired rather than in the acquisition of agricultural lands per se.

[Keywords: decentralisation; democratic centralism; democratic devolution; panchayati raj; party hegemony]

The puzzle of seven consecutive, progressively decisive victories by the Communist Party of India (Marxist)-led Left Front government (CPM and LF for short) in the democratically elected state legislative assembly and panchayat elections of West Bengal, as also their dominant showing in the national elections during this period of three decades, has yet to be satisfactorily explained. This pervasive dominance led to the creation of the myth of invulnerability of CPM and LF, which ruling party cadres and leaders had come to believe and many in the opposition and the masses seemed to accept as fait accompli. The May 2008 panchayat elections, for the first time, and the elections to the national Parliament in April-May 2009 subsequently, have exploded this myth. Wielding power at the level of panchayat raj institutions (PRIs) have been one of the

prime instrumental factors that enabled the LF government to rule at the state level, and project a strong CPM lobby at the national Parliament. Governance at the panchayat, state, and national levels has been mutually reinforcing. For long, PRIs in West Bengal have been projected as a successful model of local self-government for the nation. No other party can claim, much less expect in any state in India, to equal the CPM record of successive successful electoral performances in West Bengal.

In this paper we propose to confine ourselves to examining the process of institutionalisation of the panchayat system in West Bengal in the last three decades of LF rule. Democratic centralism to which the CPM and LF partners are wedded had led to the shaping – social/political construction – of PRIs in West Bengal (Kumar and Ghosh 1996: 86; Bhattacharya 2002: 188; Mukherji 2008: 45). The ruling party, in the process, succeeded in establishing supremacy of its ideological and political hegemony over the masses. The tenets of democratic centralism that CPM and LF pursued meant that grassroots lower-level deliberations at the party level over policy and action had to move up to the central level, where decisions actually took place. Once a decision was taken by the apex body of the party, the lower levels had only to conform and become executors of the decision, answerable for any lapse. Since PRIs were largely under the CPM-led LF rule, this model of democratic centralism pervaded the deliberations and decision making of PRIs.

In contrast, the philosophy and policy of democratic decentralisation, and panchayati raj in particular, as enacted by the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts in Parliament, is to reach self-government at the sub-state levels of the Gram (village) Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti, and Zilla Parishad, where both planning and its execution is supposed to take place. During the three decades and more of complete hegemonic supremacy exercised by CPM, contradictions developed within LF, and between LF and the masses; it got manifested in the style of governance of the ruling party at the grassroots level.

The problematic before us is: can democratic centralism of the ruling party and democratic decentralisation of the panchayat system be reconciled? We will argue that, in West Bengal, where the ruling party hegemony prevailed for over three decades, this contradiction is fast maturing and will have implications for the Assembly elections in 2011.

Left Front: Contradictions – Internal and External

Contradictions within LF arose from the propensity of an increasingly overconfident and overzealous dominant coalition partner to enlarge its sphere of dominance within the LF fold. The LF trend towards fraternal

contests in some selected constituencies in the last two panchayat elections (May 2003 and May 2008), precipitated by prominent coalition partners, is indicative of a tug-of-war test of strength by the junior coalition partners to demonstrate their relative political clout within LF dominated by an ambitious CPM. Ostensibly, this testing of panchayat electoral waters could be linked with the assessment of the 'winnability' factor in the allocation of seats among the LF constituents for the ensuing Parliamentary elections. The Left Front had to remain united in a non-antagonistic relationship when it came to national or state elections. The April-May 2009 election to Parliament proved calamitous with the CPM tally reducing from twenty-six to nine and that of LF reducing from thirty-five to fifteen (excluding one Independent) out of forty-two seats in West Bengal.

Apparently, in Kerala, where CPM has a formidable presence and where it is neither always in power nor always out of power, by all accounts, considerable devolution of democratic self-rule at the village level has not only made phenomenal gains, but is credited with the best performance in the country. Clearly, PRIs have progressively demo-cratised over a period, irrespective of whether LF or non-LF was in power. Does this imply reconciliation between democratic centralism and democratic decentralisation? Or, is it indicative of other factors endogenous to Kerala that contribute to the evolving strong ethos of democratic decentralisation? Does it suggest that CPM in Kerala follows a model of party centralism different from that in West Bengal? The question that is of fundamental significance is: how does one explain what made CPM in West Bengal a unique party that could rule the state 'absolutely' for three decades?

Is Decentralisation Democratic Devolution?

An important source of conceptual confusion lies in conflating decentralisation with democratic devolution. Decentralisation ipso facto does not have to be a process of democratisation. Even authoritarian political systems decentralise (Dwaipayan Bhattacharya 2006: 97-98). The rush for decentralisation, for instance, in the 1980s, particularly in the depleted African economies, was driven by the conditionalities of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund for ensuring efficient service delivery. An important contention worthy of serious consider-ation is whether decentralisation in the panchayat system in West Bengal has been taking place through proper democratic devolution of power and decision-making at the grassroots, or through deconcentration and delegation of power that is centralised. Subham Chaudhuri (2007: 187-

90), for example, on an aggregate index of devolution, constructed out of some ten attributes[1] with equal weights for fourteen major states in India, on a scale of (minus) 1, 0, and (plus) 1, ranked West Bengal with a score of 7, second only to Kerala with a score of 8.

In their study of the panchayat elections in West Bengal in May 1993, Girish Kumar and Buddhadeb Ghosh lauded the contribution of the LF government in filling up 'a long-standing institutional gap that existed between the masses and the Government' (1996: 79). The panchayat system of PRIs had proved to be an effective service delivery system and a much sought after political institution of the rural masses in the state, and yet it had not moved very much beyond this. The uniform perception of the respondents in the study was 'half-yearly and yearly meetings of the Gram Sabha(s) [were] not appropriate fora for airing grievances about malfunctioning of Gram Panchayats' (*ibid.*). Kumar and Ghosh concluded that the 'Gram Sabha [had] no significance in the West Bengal panchayat system and consequently a statutory forum which [was] closest to direct democracy could not be utilised by the people' (*ibid.*: 90-91).

More recently, the empirically based assessment of Dwaipayan Bhattacharya notes that, in West Bengal,

> decentralization is modelled on a top down format of reform, some key public services such as education and health facilities have been poor almost everywhere in the state, and in the regions marked by complete marginality of its population – such as those blocks that have heavy Scheduled Tribe population – even the basic delivery system mechanism of the panchayat has collapsed' (2006: 119).

Obviously aggregating items that are decentralised into a quantitative index of devolution does not indicate where the locus of decision making lies.

The official position of CPM is clear about the relationship between the party and its panchayat functionaries as office bearers or members of PRIs. Some of the party documents discussed by Moitree Bhattacharya (2002: 182) bring considerable clarity: the *Party Chithi* (Party Letter) No. 5 (July 1998) of the West Bengal State Committee of CPM, in vernacular, states that all office bearers at all the three tiers must be party full-timers. If they are party members, they will be able to convey the decisions of the Parichalak Party Committee to the ordinary gram panchayat members. Earlier this rule was applicable up to panchayat samiti level; now, the party wants to extend it up to the gram panchayat level.

Reading the *Rajnaitik Sangathanik* (Political Organisational) Report of the Bardhaman District Committee, Moitree Bhattacharya observes, 'the Committee confessed that powers of elected representatives are being

curtailed. It stated that once decisions are taken at respective party committees and decisions are conveyed to the panchayat representatives, efforts should be made to explain why a decision has been taken' (*ibid.*). She refers again to the *Panchayat Parichalona Nirdeshika* (Panchayat Administration Directives) of CPM that makes it clear that both the panchayats and the government are instruments for mobilisation of people for class struggle, and that 'PRI members shall work under the control of respective party committees. The Zilla Parishad's day-to-day activities shall be conducted under the leadership of District Committee, panchayat samitis under Zonal Committee and gram panchayat under Local Committee leadership' (*ibid.*: 183).

Finally, two provisions in the amendments to the West Bengal Panchayat Raj Act in 1994, among others, are very significant. (1) They provided for the disqualification of a member if s/he acted against the common decision of the political group to which s/he belonged. (2) Provision for a District Council was made in every district under the chairmanship of the leader of the opposition in the zilla parishad (Moitree Bhattacharya 2002: 34-35).

Our own findings from the study of the panchayat election of May 2008 in West Bengal[2] confirms the enormous weight of party leadership on elected panchayat functionaries. One classic experience in our fieldwork symbolising this phenomenon is worth sharing. We were interviewing an outgoing Scheduled Caste pradhan (Chairman of gram panchayat) in Nadia district, belonging to the fisher-folk caste. We met him in his office just before lunchtime. He was in his mid-forties. The panchayat was the stronghold of CPM and had won the coveted Nirmal Gram Award for environmental cleanliness and peace. Our steady stream of conversation was interrupted by the intrusion of a CPM party cadre, a Bengali *bhadralok* youngster in his early thirties, accompanied by his neatly dressed, bespectacled aunt who was also an outgoing pradhan in the neighbouring gram panchayat. He was a self-assured, confident person with an air of authority that cowed down the pradhan. Our conversation with the pradhan was cut short by him when he (the pradhan) was in the process of answering our question – the intruder brusquely asked him to keep quiet and took over the interview. We thought he would relieve us of his presence at lunchtime, but he sat anchored after having got some *mudi* (puffed rice) for himself, which he kept on munching. He was polite, friendly, exuded over-confidence, as he clearly expected CPM to retain the seat, and answered all our questions. He was with us till he saw us off in our car. It was clear he made sure that we did not have a chance to interview the pradhan one-to-one. He spoke on his behalf in his presence as a responsible party cadre.

Two significant responses are worth sharing. Asked what procedure his party followed in the selection of a candidate for panchayat election, with a wry secretive smile he replied he could not share this information. When pressed further, he said, the party knows best who to select? But how, we persisted? With an enigmatic meaningful smile he replied 'The party has its own eyes and ears'. It was obvious that he meant to communicate that he belonged to that category. At this point, suddenly, the pradhan in an exuberant tone exclaimed with conviction, 'Even if a banana tree were selected as the candidate, the party would be right and we have to support it!' Throughout our fieldwork we found the phenomena of watchful 'eyes and ears' and the 'banana tree' conspicuously present.

It can be safely concluded that, in West Bengal, decentralisation has largely taken the form of deconcentration and, to an extent, delegation of power, rather than devolution of power to the panchayat leadership. In effect, this means that the panchayat system has been mediated by a party cadre, on behalf of the people, under the strict control of a Marxist party discipline wedded to democratic centralism. From the reading of literature in this area and our own field exposure, impressionistically, we can say, as a service delivery system, the performance of the panchayat system has been almost exemplary in the initial stages of popular land-reforms movement and satisfactory as the party settled down to routine execution of rural development schemes, but uneven in the last decade.

During the first phase, the party entrenched itself in the panchayat structure, shaping its system with an expanding party membership. It established a pervasive dominance ideationally, on the basis of ideology, structurally through a disciplined party cadre and politically by winning the electoral mandate to govern. This was a kind of party hegemony-in-itself for and on behalf of the people. In the second phase, the movement phase being over, the party settled down with a pro-poor, redistributive model of rural development. Structurally, the panchayats were not entrusted with the power of decision making, which continued to remain with the party and its centralised apparatus. A kind of transformation from hegemony-in-itself to hegemony-for-itself of the party was taking place. The primacy of sustaining the party in power tilted the importance of party cadres vis-à-vis the panchayat and the people to be served. In the third phase, the party was fully on hegemony-for-itself mode, with its attendant contradictions showing. Within the party and in the public domain a myth of invincibility of CPM was clearly registering. More recently, in response to challenges to the party from the panchayat elections, the party is showing some signs of self-moderation.

Current Challenges Facing the Panchayat System

West Bengal is currently faced with certain undeniable empirical realities. The CPM-led LF government was voted massively to power in 2006 under the next-generation dynamic leadership of Buddhadeb Bhatta-charya. The campaign for the impressive victory sought a mandate for industrialisation that sought foreign investments under the 'socialistic' liberalising regime. This implied the clear possibility of acquisition of agricultural lands by the government. The government also needed to make the stagnating agriculture more lucrative and productive by diversification of crops in greater tune with market demands. The idea of contract farming was mooted, and with it the investment in retail trade by investors. These and other economic reforms were compulsions of a sort to reverse the sagging economy under mounting fiscal crisis.

Consistent with the high voltage campaign, the Chief Minister, after assuming office, promptly announced that Tata Motors will bring out their much-hyped cheapest car in the world, Nano, from West Bengal. Announcements regarding setting up Special Economic Zones for parking industries provided with efficient infrastructure followed. Investors, Indian and foreign, began prospecting, or were being lured, for investment in the state in right earnest. A paradigm change in the development model was introduced. West Bengal got poised for an era of rapid economic growth for creating employment and presented a positive investment climate.

A deep seated peasant culture, preponderantly small peasant, dependant on subsistence crop cultivation, used to protection against rich peasants and landlords, secured against unlawful tenancy evictions, having benefited from distribution of surplus land-ceiling, could not suddenly come to terms with the logic of forcible acquisition of land for the industrialisation project. This led to a groundswell of peasant resis-tance and mobilisation. Opposition parties, particularly the Trinamool Congress (TMC) under the fiery leadership of Mamata Banerjee, and supported by Naxalite parties, appropriated peasant initiative. Singur and Nandigram became the sights for militant confrontations between CPM and TMC. The contradiction between agriculture and industry was sought to be sharpened by the opposition.

The impact of these confrontations did not remain localised. In the panchayat elections of May 2008, coming barely two years after the massive mandate to the CPM-led LF in the state assembly, the reverberations of Nandigram and Singur rocked the LF supremacy. Compared to the panchayat elections in 2003, LF won two fewer zilla parishads. The number of panchayat samitis under their control

registered a sharp decline from 280 to 190 (from 85% to 58%), with LF securing 4,929 seats out of the 8,800 seats (56%). Correspondingly, the decline in the number of gram panchayats within the LF fold was from 2,311 in 2003 to 1,625 out of 3,220 in 2008 (that is, from 71.77% to 50.47%) (Chattopadhay 2008). The debacle in Singur was pulverising for CPM. In the 2003 panchayat elections, CPM was in command in thirteen out of the seventeen gram panchayats, with the panchayat samiti under their complete control. In 2008, TMC had ousted them from all except one seat, with fifteen out of sixteen gram panchayats comprehensively rejecting CPM. In Nandigram, the situation was no better.

The first panchayat-level electoral setback for CPM in three decades led to an unprecedented paralysis of the state administration, and a more strident opposition taking advantage of this. The opposition was able to blockade the main national highway to Kolkata for over a fortnight and compelled Tata Motors to close shop just about the time they were planning to roll out the Nanos. The LF government stood a mute spectator even as the Tata Motors announced their decision to relocate their flagship project elsewhere.

Finally, inner-LF contradictions surfaced more conspicuously than in the past. Fraternal contests in the panchayat elections in some places turned fratricidal. Tensions carried over into major confrontations on administrative and policy matters within the cabinet on fundamental issues relating to foreign investment in retail trading. Charges were traded on lack of transparency within the cabinet on vital policy matters and their execution, including land acquisition.

Given this perspective, the following fundamental questions arise:

> How does one explain the massive mandate given to the CPM-led LF on industrialisation in the state assembly elections of 2006 receiving a setback from the same electorate in the panchayat elections of 2008 just two years later? Was this because the people did not comprehend the consequences of their earlier mandate?

> Has the contradiction between the practice of rigid democratic centralism of CPM (and of the other Left parties), and the logic of democratic devolution of power to PRIs now started surfacing in West Bengal?

We will argue that the reversal faced by LF in the last panchayat elections was on account of the failed expectations of the rural electorate rather than because of a basic misconception of what was to follow. While the contradiction between agriculture and industry is palpably present – it could not be otherwise – it was certainly not the primary contradiction. The primary contradiction is embedded in the party hege-

mony of CPM, an accretion over three decades that has made it appear as a Durkheimian social fact, exercising exteriority and constraint. This is what has led to the (not irreconcilable) incompatibility between democratic centralism as practised by the CPM-led LF government in West Bengal and the very spirit of democratic decentralisation. Partha N. Mukherji has observed:

> The prevailing primary contradiction ... lies in the domain of political oppression, with the ruling party manifestly displaying the power to oppress if their hegemony was questioned on any issue. Nandigram and Singur provide the contexts that brought to the public fore the magnitude and capacity of the latent power of the ruling party to oppress with impunity (2008: 44).

Failed Expectations

There is no reason to believe that the masses, by and large, did not enthusiastically respond to the campaign appeal of the Chief Minister in 2006. He did communicate well with telling expressive slogans like 'agriculture is our base and industry, the future'. In fact, LF government was unquestionably in command with more than three-fourths majority (235 out of 294 seats) in the state assembly. In its urgency to push the industrialisation process hard and fast it took recourse to a method that in people's perception was incongruent with its own image. The party invoked the extant old colonial Act of 1894 to find a readymade solution to land acquisition and compensation. This resulted in a paradoxical situation. The entire legacy on which the CPM citadel of power accrued through democratic renewal was the enactment and invocation of progressive legislations for a pro-poor, redistributive model of growth from which millions of poor households bettered their livelihood standards. The sudden recourse to a regressive colonial legislation adversely affected the livelihoods of the very same category. The mechanistically framed compensation package failed to arrest the devastating impact on countless marginal families. The expectation of the people was that the pro-poor principle of the party would not be compromised.

While it is true that the agrarian contradiction surfacing on account of acquisition of agricultural lands for mega-industrial projects fuelled opposition forces, there are at least three compelling reasons to suggest that the primary contradiction is not between agriculture and industry. First, agricultural lands acquired in Rajarhat, Howrah, Siliguri, and other projects went unnoticed. There was not a whimper over these land acquisitions. Second, in Singur, there was a spontaneous peasant

resistance, irrespective of party affiliation or support, from the time the acquisition of lands for the Tata Motors was at the stage of just a possibility. Yet a section of the very same peasantry became the main voice of the Nano Bachao Committee (Save Nano Committee). The composition of this Committee is well represented by both CPM and TMC support-base, heavily weighted with peasants. Finally, the massive mobilisations by Mamata Banerjee in Singur that shook the West Bengal government have shown a drastic decline in their appeal over time. The inference is that if the government had designed a compensation package that could ensure the reproduction of livelihoods, particularly of the poor and marginalised, at existing or better levels, this acute dislocating situation would probably not have arisen.

Primary Contradiction in Political Oppression of the *Hegemon*

We have stated earlier that the primary contradiction is embedded in the CPM party hegemony. This underwent qualitative change. The process of crystallisation of hegemony witnessed the party's strong identification with poorer and marginalised population that took place during the crusading period of land reforms. The dependent peasantry and militant labour provided the mass base of peasants and workers. With invariant successes in the assembly and panchayat elections, the ruling party hegemony generated a myth of invincibility, seeking to sustain itself on its own cadre organisation. This gave rise to internal contradictions within LF creating sources of alienation within its own mass base, preparing the objective conditions for the growth of counter-hegemonic opposition challenges.

Singur, a CPM stronghold during 2003-08, provides an excellent illustration of our position.[3] The acquisition of Singur lands for the Tata Motors project took place during this period. The Nano factory was 85 per cent complete and about to roll out its small car by October 2008. Subsequent to the panchayat election of May 2008, the CPM stronghold became a TMC fortress. The Tata Motors had to close shop and decided to depart. Initially, the entire peasantry opposed the acquisition of land; after the acquisition, they refused to accept the decision of the government and, with it, the compensation.

After about one year of aggressive protest and mounting support by the peasantry to the TMC leadership, which promised land-in-return-for-acquired-land, the mood changed, with peasants beginning to volunteer to accept compensation. This happened because of two reasons. The TMC promise appeared remote and unrealisable without any timeframe – the voluntary wait could not remain indefinite. More importantly, there

was a visible vibrancy in the local economy, with expanding job and investment opportunities showing up at various levels as fallout of the accelerated Tata Motors' activities. The peasants too discovered a stake in the economic opportunities by investing from compensation money.

Even after the departure of the Tata Motors, the Nano Bachao Committee seems to be determined to see that some large industrial investment takes place on the same project site. The so-called unwilling peasants (*onichhuk chasis*) are collecting their cheques in regular trickle. Until 2 December 2008, reports coming from the field suggested that only about 102 acres out of 997 acres acquired remained to be compensated. In the Singur context, the primary contradiction is not between agriculture and industry.

We argue that it was not the acquisition of agricultural lands *per se* but the manner in which they were acquired that point to the prevailing primary contradiction. The project land was obtained through a combination of police force and party-cadre intimidation and violence. Dissent, even from within the CPM support-base, was not spared. Long-standing CPM supporters of the Singur region were shell-shocked. The consequence, as we have seen, was a wholesale rejection of CPM in the panchayat elections and the installation of TMC more firmly in its place.

In order to follow the process, it is important to follow the happenings after the state assembly elections of May 2006. The day after Buddhadeb Bhattacharya assumed office on 18 May 2006, some 1,500 Singurians surrounded a team surveying the project area. The survey team – that included the Block Development Officer, the officer-in-charge of the police station, staff of the Tata Motors, some villagers from Ujjwal Sangha (a social club), and Suhrid Datta (Zonal Commiittee Secretary of CPM convicted under the sensational Taposi Malik rape and murder case) – had no wind of what was taking place. Suhrid Datta, who belongs to Singur, explained that other lands were also being shown to the Tata Motors in Bado Kamalapur and Dankuni, so nothing was final. A week later, a similar incident repeated itself on a lower key. About a fortnight later, the Additional District Magistrate came to serve a notification on the proposed land acquisition, but the non-violent protestors refused to accept it and he was compelled to return. Thereafter, peasant protest gained high momentum, as large number of truck loads of protestors (at their own cost) made several trips to the District Magistrate's office presenting petitions against land acquisition. On none of these occasions did the District Magistrate have the courtesy to meet them.

When the administration turned a deaf ear, the TMC stepped in to listen to them and empathise. The notification of acquisition was pasted

in the Block Development Office, with a detailed map of lands acquired. The administration was in a hurry to dispose of compensation cheques. Recipients were asked to collect their cheques after getting their ownership deeds verified. This procedure was begun in the third week of September 2006. Absentee landowners, some diehard cadres, and a few others who stood to gain promptly started collecting their cheques. Soon it was discovered that cheques were being collected by persons who did not have the right entitlement. The most important lacuna was discovered in the case of lands that had been transferred but not mutated.[4] Some persons collected compensations on lands they had already transferred after having received full payment. Since there were innumerable cases of lands that had been purchased but not mutated, the affected landowners went to the Block Development Officer to complain.

The TMC party chief Mamata Banerjee immediately took up the cause. The crucial meeting took place at the Block Development Office on 25 September 2006 in the presence of Mamata Banerjee, the District Magistrate, the Additional District Magistrate, the Block Development Officer, the TMC state legislator from the area (Robin Bhattacharya), peasant leaders, and many others. The main demand was to stop issuing compensation cheques until all the mutations on land transfers were completed. The protestors, it may be noted, did not raise any question on the nature of compensation. The dialogue dragged on, as the officials were reluctant to delay the procedure and the protestors hung on to their demand. The acquired land had to be expeditiously handed over to the Tata Motors so that the manufacturing process could start at the earliest. Nearly 5,000 people – men, women, and some with children – were inside the Office compound as the negotiations dragged on till midnight.

The Singur Block Development Office has a fairly large campus surrounded by compound walls on all sides, with a large single-gate entry. Just past midnight, suddenly, all lights went off and the police engaged in a brutal *lathi*[5]-charge that injured around 100 people (including children) requiring hospitalisation. Mamata Banerjee was one of the victims.

An interpretative understanding of Singur reveals several features of the CPM hegemony. First, land acquisition was done without any prior information to or interaction with the panchayat and the 'land-loser' category. Consequently, it reflected a lack of concern about how to design a transparently fair and equitable compensation package. The Party (CPM) decided on behalf of the people, the panchayats had only to accept and implement the decision. Second, an intransigent District Magistrate, who could ignore the voice of peasants whose livelihoods were at stake, was unlikely to do so unless he had instructions from his

political bosses. The Party provided the guidelines on administrative action. Bureaucracy had very little role to play in its professional capacity. Third, the administration by itself would not have the courage to unleash its coercive power on a peaceful assembly of innocent citizens using violence in the darkness of night by switching off the lights, blinding them from the unsuspecting blows of *lathi*s. Opposition to the Party agenda had to be countered. There is consensus that 25 September was the turning point in the Singur episode that ultimately took toll of the Tata Motors.

The opposition by TMC took a counter-hegemonic form. A victim of *lathi*-charge by the police on 25 September 2006, restrained from entry into Singur by the police when the project site was handed over to the Tata Motors on 2 December 2006, Mamata Banerjee called for a state-wide *bandh*, and undertook a 25-day hunger strike from 3 December. On the Prime Minister's personal intervention she broke fast on 28 December 2006. These and cumulating events were followed by electoral success in the panchayat elections of May 2008.

We have noted the panchayat election verdict in Singur. No sooner TMC reversed the CPM dominance in Singur and in Nandigram and emerged as a counterforce in the panchayat arena, it became aggressively oppositional to almost any policy of CPM. With regard to Singur, Mamata Banerjee bade 'Tata bye bye'. The panchayat samiti took almost instant decisions on (a) refusing sanction to the Tata Motors for any construction, (b) refusing permission for any trade or business agreements involving the Tata Motors, and (c) asked the Tata Development Initiative to stop their free mobile medical service. Many petitions for continuation of Tata social work initiatives remained rejected. Singur got projected as a major issue in the public domain of the state. Proponents and opponents of liberalisation regime locked horns in public debates through media and *manchs*.[6] The predominant view was in favour of industrialisation with a human face, but certainly not for Tata to go away.

The TMC chief stepped up her political posture by promising all 'land-losers' in Singur 'land-for-acquired land'. Subsequently she toned it down to return of land from within the acquired lands to unwilling peasants who had followed her call not to collect the compensation cheque – a promise that seemed doomed by any rational consideration. Nonetheless, she was able to block the National Highway from all incoming and outgoing trade, and passenger and private traffic from 24 August till 8 September 2008, mobilising huge crowds from outside Singur, and providing a forum for intellectuals on her side to air their critique of the LF policies. Law and order worsened to the extent that the

Tata Motors had to close and, finally, to leave. The Party (CPM) was in a quandary, unused to such vitriolic attacks from the opposition with massive support. The state administration remained paralysed, unable to act without orders from above.

Many small and marginal peasants who felt devastated by the forcible land-acquisition clung on to Mamata Banerjee as the last-straw leadership, believing she will get them back their petty landholdings. The situation had become all the more acute for them from a totally unanticipated quarter. Women who had been married away by their parents after-disposing valuable land to meet marriage expenses, hitherto had never shown any interest in claiming any share either in the produce or even in land transactions that took place after their marriage. When compensations were announced by the government, almost all such women demanded a share. The share of compensation of the actual tillers got divided by the number of such shares. This had a devastating effect, particularly on small and marginal farmers.

Middle and rich peasants, who had earlier protested the acquisition, now started demanding from TMC to know when her promise will materialise. Realising the futility of holding on to her indefinitely by voluntarily refusing compensation, the process of peasants signing their consent papers and collecting their compensations began. They invested in the opportunities that came with the Tata Motors activities. Unfortunately for them, the Tata Motors withdrawal served a heavy blow. Meanwhile, the government made its position quite clear: the departure of Tata Motors will not mean that any portion of the acquired lands can go back to the original owners.

Every subsequent mobilisation by Mamata Banerjee for her demonstrative marches reinforcing her resolve to the peasant cause drew less and less involvement of the Singur peasants. Her meeting on 2 December 2008 drew barely 500 people, of whom a mere 150 or so were the unwilling peasants from Singur. Reports suggest that her promise made in the earlier meeting a fortnight or so ago, to break open the boundary wall of the project site and start cultivating potatoes, was not even mentioned. Her declaration that the work of 'reclaiming' lost land from the project site was being handed over to the Krishi Jami Rakhsa Committee (Save Agricultural Land Committee), was received with dismay and utter frustration by her small peasant adherents.

Singur is an appropriate illustration of what consequences can flow from the exercise of party hegemonic, highly centralised decision-making, and the use of structural coercive and violent methods in an overall democratic framework. The presumptuous manner in which land was acquired and the intimidatory means by which opposition was

suppressed and possession of acquired lands sought to be taken, and utilising a democratically elected panchayat system that was given no voice of its own, cost the state very heavily for a genuinely conceived industrialisation project sure to benefit the masses.

The counter-hegemonic force that mimicked the *hegemon* in almost every respect, in a similar manner and through similar means, succeeded in scuttling the industrialisation project in Singur with pathological satisfaction. It, however, failed in its promise to those marginal peasants who pinned their instinctual faith in the party and its leader, devastating their lives perhaps even more. Here, again, the democratic panchayat system was appropriated to carry out the central commands of the party leader. It will be worth watching if Singur emerges into a stronger democratic entity out of these experiences, reversing the trend by demanding from parties what Singur needs, rather than playing second fiddle to what political parties want out of them.

Conclusion

Pranab Bardhan and Dilip Mookherjee, who did a comprehensive field survey of eighty-five villages for panchayat study in West Bengal covering the period 1978-98, commenting on the serial success of LF in panchayat elections, perceptively observed 'This may either reflect genuine pro-incumbency sentiment among voters or the ability of incumbents to use their command over local law and order or electoral machines to gain an advantage over their political rivals' (2007: 221). This observation pertained to findings a decade ago. It is more pertinent to say that, at the empirical level, the pro-incumbency factor was more pronounced in the first two decades of the CPM rule, whilst in the later period hegemony-for-itself and manipulative command seems to have taken over. The recent panchayat elections are more an indication of an anti-incumbency reaction to hardened ruling-party hegemony. The opposition should not be misled into believing that the electoral verdict favoured them; its electoral gains have been largely by default, except in its traditional pockets of strength.

It devolves on all the parties to have a consensus on the autonomous role of the panchayats, giving them space for self-government. It would be appropriate to conclude with the observations of two great votaries of democratic decentralisation – one a Gandhian, the other a Marxist. The Gandhian Jayaprakash Narayan, appealing to political parties, observed:

> Instead of attempting to drag panchayati raj into their struggle for power, they should combine and co-operate so as to make it a success...In short, instead of wanting themselves to govern in the name of the people, they

should help the people to govern themselves. No party could aspire to play a nobler role (1962: 608).

The Marxist E.M.S Namboodiripad, the architect of the panchayat system in Kerala, which today is an exemplar of democratic decentralisation, observed:

> The situation, however, is slightly different at the level of local administration. Divided as they (parties) are on broader issues of policy which are being handled at the Central and State levels, the political parties have no major differences on the problems that come up inside the organs of local administration...It is therefore possible at this level to bring these different parties together and implement the slogans of non-party administration provided there is a non-partisan approach on the part of leaders of all the parties...Not only is this possible but it is desirable also. For, partisan fighting will do immense harm to the smooth and efficient functioning of the organs of local administration (1962: 620).

Notes

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1. These attributes are based on the state-level index of decentralisation used by the Eleventh Finance Commission in 1994 for financial allocation to various states.
2. Bhola Nath Ghosh and Partha N. Mukherji did a rapid election appraisal study of the West Bengal panchayat election of May 2008.
3. Buddhadeb Ghosh of the Instiute of Social Sciences, Kolkata; Bhola Nath Ghosh of the Indian Statistical Institute Kolkata, and Partha N. Mukherji of the Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi have been involved in continuous field study of Singur since 23 September 2008.
4. Formal transfer of land in the land market involves a deed of transfer in which the price of the property is paid by the buyer to the seller. This deed then is followed up by mutation of this property in the land records of the government. Until it is mutated, the name of the previous owner still figures in the land records.
5. *Lathi* is long rounded wooden staff, about a metre in length, with circumference of less than three cm, usually made out of sturdy bamboo stalk. It is the most elementary non-firearm weapon used by the police and by many in the villages.
6. *Manch* is public meeting platform catering to a mass audience, usually in the open.

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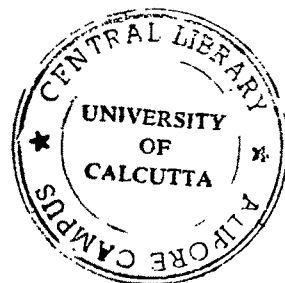
The Corruption Bazaar:
A Conceptual Discussion

Neelambar Hatti, Mason C. Hoadley and *James Heimann*

Corruption is a salient feature of human condition in any organised society. Where risks are low and the returns are high, corruption is almost inevitable. Nevertheless, defining corruption is difficult, especially as there are forms of behaviour that break with the rules and mores of the organisation that may or may not be termed corruption. Many approaches implicitly assume corruption to be anomalous. This paper argues that corruption should not be seen from a moralistic position as deviant behaviour from Eurocentric, Weberian standards. Rather, it should be analysed through what we term the bazaar model of interpersonal behaviour emphasising primarily economic motives, coupled with an inductive, inside-outside approach.

[Keywords: corruption bazaar; governance; homo economicus;
Indonesia; public administration]

Defining corruption is as elusive as defining pornography or terrorism. Clearly, the respective feelings of repugnance, titillation, or fear thus produced are the results of concrete actions stemming from amassing of material or non-material gains by unsavoury means, sexual stimulation by act, representation, or description, and physical violence or the threat thereof. These are assumed to be negative. They could just as easily be positive as, for example, in the distribution of goods and services, repro-ducing the species, or defending oneself, one's family, or one's country. The goodness or badness of an act is in the eye of the beholder. The point is that, without a reasonably precise definition, it is difficult to draw the line between, say, flexible bureaucratic practice and corruption. The issue becomes even more problematic when society attempts to prevent,

limit, or eradicate it. If it cannot be defined reasonably, then the danger exists that generally accepted laws and regulations would be shunted aside in favour of temporary moods of those most vocal.

The following discussion[1] by no means attempts to define corruption. Rather, it aims at pruning the overly luxuriant definitional plant to a more manageable size, drawing upon experiences of contemporary Indonesia and India. While Indonesia is less transparent (that is, more 'corrupt') – 126th compared with 85th on a scale of 180, according to Transparency Perception Index 2008, India is considerably more open in discussing the issue. This provides a window of opportunity for empirical research on the prevalence of corruption, a 'culture of corruption' (*budaya korupsi* in Indonesia and *brashtachar* in India), as well as its perception by the actors.[2] The obvious contrasts between their respective colonial past, including the relative centrality of governance over time, only enhances the usefulness of a comparative approach.

By seeing corruption, however defined, as part of the bureaucratic system, we hope to avoid the false juxtaposition of corruption and good governance. Institutionally, corruption can be analysed through what we term as a market or bazaar model of interpersonal behaviour emphasising primarily economic motives. An additional factor comes from changes in the political structure, both during the colonial era and since independence.

Definition

One consequence of corruption's lack of a robust definition is the tendency toward a tautology: we are all corrupt. Greatly simplified, we are talking about the very human characteristic of benefiting from resources belonging to a larger collective of which we are at best only part owners. The conclusion must be that almost all productive activity involves some 'skimming off the top' or dipping into collective resources for individual benefit. Punishable acts thus become devilish hard to separate from non-punishable ones; it is almost always a question of degree rather than of kind. Who at the office strictly limits communications to those furthering the organisation's goals? How many homes do not have pens, erasers, and paper 'borrowed' from the office? Even the amount of material or non-material resources involved is no guide. Large quantities of time paid for by organisations is 'stolen' by employees for private ends in, for example, non-work related surfing on the Internet, personal e-mails and telephone conversations, and even leaving the work place early to pick up children from day-care centres. Such activities are undoubtedly necessary for the well being of individuals

and their families, which is why they are tolerated, often with tacit approval of employers. This is despite the fact that, in regard to the organisation's efficiency, they constitute substantial economic losses not recorded in the economic accounts. On the other hand, favours, gifts, or other advantages coming from competitors, the mass media, known criminal elements, or extremists are not tolerated in any amount however small.

For want of precision, students of corruption tend to dodge the issue. Preference is given to short, quotable, if exceedingly broad, definitions as '... the abuse or complicity in the abuse of private or public power, office or resources for personal gain' (ACT/1/2007/wps). Although true and universally acceptable, such definitions do not provide grounds for further research. As it would appear that corruption *per se* is too diffuse to be defined with sufficient precision to render it an autonomous field of scholarly inquiry, we must change tactics. Taking a page from a work nearly four decades old, it is useful to draw a distinction between criminality and various degrees of malfeasance in public office. Syed Hussein Alatas in a seminal essay, *The Sociology of Corruption* (1968), convincingly demonstrated the importance of differentiating between corruption and criminal behaviour, on the one hand, and between corruption and maladministration or mismanagement, on the other. All are detrimental to public interest. Hence, we are not corrupt, merely criminal or incompetent!

As a result, several fairly common aspects unproductively seen as 'corruption' can be eliminated. The most obvious is stealing from the public weal or, to give it a formal name, embezzlement. These are among the commonest acts. Moreover, they are, from a purely legal point of view, conceptually uncomplicated; showing that they have or have not occurred is relatively straightforward, though the mechanics of proof can be tedious. Moreover, due to the fact that they fall under the province of existing laws and regulations, it seems unnecessary to bring them into a discussion of corruption. This is especially so because it is far easier, and thus judicially more efficient, to establish acts of theft or embezzlement than corruption.

A second aspect, namely malfeasance, can likewise be eliminated. Corruption is characterised by intent, multiple actors, secrecy, mutual obligations and benefits, deception, contrary dual function, and violations of norms of duty and responsibility within civil order (*ibid.*:13-14). These distinguish it from malfeasance, maladministration, and mis-management, which do not necessarily amount to corruption. Moreover, malfeasance falls under the provisions of specific laws and ordinances the breach of which carry or should carry legal sanctions and thus can be

differentiated from corruption. Thus, in theory, bureaucratic effectiveness, or the lack thereof, is separable from criminal acts, malfeasance, and mismanagement.

Corruption Studies

Even though Alatas' definition takes us in the right direction, there is another aspect to be considered in relation to scientific definitions. Somewhat simplified, corruption studies tend to fall under 'area studies', judicial sciences, or public administration, the latter placed vaguely somewhere between political science, economics, and even peace research. In area studies, corruption is understood as something characteristic of a particular state or region. It may play or may be thought to play an important role in, say, Nigeria, Indonesia, and India or a minor one in, say, the Nordic countries, USA, or Singapore. The approach rightly emphasises that the forms and norms of corruption are indelibly connected to the specific time and place. These may or may not show similarities in origin or practice. They most certainly will show considerable differences in what constitutes corruption. What the approach gains in taking into account local culture and ways of doing things, it loses in temporal and geographical comparability.

Corruption as part of judicial studies overcomes the problem of loose definitions. Judicial proceedings are predicated on the existence of specific and enforceable rules and regulations, the breech of which is sufficiently provable to bring a case before an institution empowered to 'try' an individual or organisation thought to have transgressed them. However, in order to bring a trial to successful conclusion fairly stringent proof is crucial, often requiring sufficient evidence of intention. By any standard, this is a daunting task. It is also about limiting the definition of corrupt actions to those that are legally provable. Not without importance, the approach makes the fundamental assumption that the judiciary is comprised of reliable and reasonably honest individuals. In far too many countries this is a naïve expectation.

Our preference is to see corruption as part and parcel of the administrative system. The approach overcomes the parochial character of area studies. Administration has become a more or less standardised, international manner of conducting public business, one independent of considerations of time, manner, and place. In addition, it provides an instrument for measuring performance. Whether 'insider trading' is culturally determined, criminally actionable, or merely troublesome depends very much upon local circumstances. In contrast, that a public utility does or does not provide the services it is supposed to can hardly

be a point of uncertainty. It either does or does not, or at least in the eyes of its users who ultimately pay for them. Within administrative science whether this is due to malfeasance, criminality, or corruption is more or less irrelevant. As there are built in demands of functional effectiveness (otherwise why pay for them?), lack of such can lead to termination of employment, thus raising the threshold of risk to the actors. In addition, criteria for determining malfeasance or criminality are less stringent with regard to intent. Damaging the organisation's reputation or disregarding its goals and purposes constitute grounds for termination of employment, if not legal liability, even in countries with high degrees of job security as those of Northern Europe. In any event, the spread of privatisation within public services resulting from the advances of 'new public management' practices has increased pressure for results over consi-derations of status or status quo.

However, opting for an approach from public administration studies does not resolve all methodological problems. A stumbling block to formulating a generally applicable science of corruption, even in this sphere, is whether to see the phenomenon from foreign or indigenous standpoint, from the outside or inside. It has become a point of faith that Weberian bureaucratic ideals provide the ultimate standard. Consequently, the obvious differences in actual practice throughout the world, even within Europe, are seen as 'deviations' from the norm. The fact of the matter is that, in practice, the Weberian norms are not only scarce but also ethno- and temporal-centric in the extreme. They are most commonly noticeable by their absence; their presence is limited to a small part of Northern Europe, the former English colonies in North America, and the antipodes in quite recent times. The crux of the problem is that corruption studies in general employ deductive reasoning based upon alien criteria originating from a small number of short-lived cases, that is, the Weberian bureaucratic model. That most of the world pays at least lip service to living up to the model does little to mitigate the fact that it seems almost a parody of serious scholarship.

Bazaar Concept

A useful approach to the problem of corruption is the use of a market model. By 'model' we mean simply a construct simulating reality in manageable terms. In this context, one of the most common institutions for exchange of goods and services in the two countries is the traditional market. Hence, the model seems particularly appropriate for the study of corruption. As the major motivation in economic terms, a bazaar is a mechanism for bringing together buyers and sellers, here, inside

information, influence in strategic discussions of governmental procure-
ment agencies, arranging 'favourable' outcomes, etc. It is not only a
common feature of dysfunctional bureaucratic behaviour, but also a
highly pragmatic one in that it generates wealth for its practitioners, be it
small increments to low salaries *(corruption by need)* or staggering sums
accumulated apparently for the sake of the exercise *(corruption by
greed)*. Such a concept entails a number of features, which differentiate it
from focusing on the negative, that is, reverse, features stemming from
the traditional Weberian model.

Yet the very nature of these commodities or transactions – prospective
buyers cannot go to another seller for the same or comparable
commodities as they could for eggs, oranges, horses, etc. – means that
the businesslike aspects of consumption take on features requiring
additions to a simple bazaar model. Moreover, a bazaar is not limited to
economic transactions. By its nature, it attracts a number of other
relations of a more personal character, which also must be included in
any study of corruption. Finally, a 'corruption bazaar' exists not only in a
nexus of personal relationships, but also in political ones. Thus, a final
part of our approach is to consider external political interests' impact on
dysfunctional practices of public administration in terms of demanding
funds and at the same time showing the way for corruption on a mega
scale.

Characteristics

A basic feature of the bazaar concept is reciprocity of actions: 'you get
what you pay for.' Obviously transactions take place between two or
more actors. As such, price and risk calculation are inherent parts of the
deal. If we accept the thesis of *homo economicus* as rational agents who
strive to accumulate wealth and, in game theory terms, optimize payoffs,
maximise outcomes, and minimise costs, then malfeasance in office is a
reasonable tactic. Reciprocity means that the act of buying or selling is
either planned or agreed upon in advance. That is, in corruption there
must be a goal-directed action coupled with some form of rational
calculation. A clearly defined criminal act is almost always a one-sided
action involving little or no reciprocity. Only if the owner of the object(s)
in question acts in such a manner as to facilitate the theft does there arise
'mutual obligations and benefits' or conspiracy, that is, corruption.
Because it takes two to tango, the person in collusion with the thief
expects some reward, again material or immaterial, in exchange for co-
operation. All of this stands in contrast to instances of mismanagement
and maladministration. Although both thrive in a climate of secrecy,

camouflage, and deception, mismanagement or maladministration tend to be one-off affairs, whereas much of the concern with public administration is ensuring that corrupt practices do not become repetitive, leading to systemic dysfunctional patterns. Thus, repetitive-ness can be added as another common characteristic of corruption.

Even more basic to the bazaar model is the question of price. In the traditional market, there is no fixed price. Both seller and buyer know this. Each tries to gain the advantage over the other by maximising their gains without regard to other variables, that is, pure market forces at work comprising pure 'maximisers'. There are, however, limitations in the corruption bazaar. Status and personal relationships play an important role in that one pays what one can afford, with rich or foreigners paying more and the poor less. Interpersonal relations of reputation, family relations, and influence are also important. In the nature of things varying prices include possibilities, even expectations, of bargaining and negotiation.

At the culmination of the bazaar model is risk calculation. In the bazaar this is primarily in relation to the price. Are the goods worth the price in terms of consumption or resale value *vis-à-vis* comparable choices? Risk of getting stuck with 'hot' goods is relatively small, although buying stolen goods, is usually severely punished. With what we have termed corruption, risk calculation tends to weigh the possibilities of being discovered against having wasted one's money on services that do not materialise or are not commensurate with the costs. What makes corruption so tempting is that, even if caught in a pervasive culture of corruption, the punishment for indulging in bribes, kickbacks, and the like are negligible. In contrast, returns are high from corruption and the yields of non-corruption low.

A 'corruption bazaar' is conceptualised as a cultural and political institution as well as an economic one. It operates within its own mores, rules, and traditions.[3] Moreover, any activity or action in the bazaar, however social, cultural or political in its manifestation, inevitably has an economic rationale. We should not, therefore, forget that corrupt behaviour is almost always rational behaviour based on optimising payoffs and avoiding losses. The corrupt bureaucrat is thus not some misled agent, working contrary to the supposed Weberian ideals of the state. By acting as just an employee of the state, he is instead looking out for himself, a prime example of *homo economicus*. The 'corrupter' seeking to avail himself of the bureaucrat's corrupt agency is also rationally maximising payoffs and avoiding (present or future) losses. The *corruption bazaar* is, in its multiplicity of individual tactics and strategies, *game theory gone wild*.

Modified Bazaar Concept

Be that as it may, a number of features of the corruption bazaar contrast sharply with a usual market model. It is not so much motivation *per se* – the maximisation of utilities, including status and power – but the manner in which it operates that argues for a variant of the market model. The bazaar system has several mechanisms at hand for obtaining its goals, such as a sliding price system, fragmentation of transactions, linkage, and 'clientelisation'. The purpose of most of them is to reduce risk and uncertainty in a market where transactions are not transparent and in which neither quantity, nor quality, nor prices of goods are easily determined. One of the major strategies is to avoid putting all one's eggs in a single basket. One attempts to establish alternative avenues of access, either directly to the government and its administration, or indirectly via local brokers or power holders. Through linkages established by relations of debt-credit, patron-client, broker-speculator, and various bonds of loyalty one attempts to overcome the 'pure' bazaar model's lack of transparency. The mechanisms are aimed at reducing uncertainty for both the person needing a favour and the person (official or politician) in a position to grant it in return for suitable remuneration. To add to the complexities, there are many levels of and relationships within corrupt transactions. The purveyor of favours today is the mendicant of tomorrow and vice versa. In such a market, the major outlay is the cost of information concerning heterogeneous products and their supply, as well as the availability and cost of 'credit'. More specific reasons for a departure from a standard market model revolve about (a) the unique nature of its commodities, (b) its dependence on a functioning public administration, and (c) the shared nature of the interlocking system.

The most obvious differentiating feature of the corruption bazaar is that it deals only indirectly in commodities. Corruption tends to be either an added tax to complete a transaction, which itself involves far greater monetary exchanges, or a fee for escaping an impost or, at least, greatly reducing it. The latter case is obviously the most common. Also by its very nature it involves only relatively small sums. Paying a policeman in lieu of being cited for a traffic violation and collaboration with an income tax official to recognise a fraudulent (that is, reduced) tax rate are common examples. Even these are shared. Bribes are usually split between perpetuator (buyer) and seller, or between the two and the latter's superior. An alternative form is that an agent pays a 'union fee' in exchange for a position within the public administration having opportunities for enrichment, what the Indonesians call a 'wet' position. The fee is paid in anticipation of the income derived from bribes and is

commiserate with the expected income. Should the income surpass expectations, the 'fee' is adjusted accordingly.

This brings us to high-level corruption, where sums are large and benefits correspondingly greater. For example, in bidding for tender in a public works project one strengthens one's hand through an offering to the appropriate official. Similarly, a poor application can be spiffed up with compensation to the right official(s). The latter sees to it that the application is weighted favourably. Here corruption fades into cognisable criminal acts of fraud. Of a different magnitude in uncertainty reduction is 'speeding up' of the numerous errands a citizen has with public services. Examples include getting a driver's license, a letter of reference, electricity installed or a telephone, or even being able to avoid a long wait for a railway ticket by paying a tout to queue for one. While there is no one-to-one correlation of these activities, there is always a calculation in economic terms.[4] The size of the bribe must be compensated by the profits from gaining the tender. Likewise, the rewards of the job must be at least equal to the price of obtaining it. And, finally, the time and effort saved must be worth the 'speed up' money.

A partial negation of the corruption bazaar model comes from the issue of competition. Corruption takes place within a skewed market situation. The seller is singular, buyers potentially many. The product's ultimate disposal is more or less determined by the official in charge, although within a culture of corruption the gains must be divided. The action may also require the input of several officials and other resources to 'persuade' the decision-maker as to the rightness of the buyer. Yet the product is unique in the sense that the buyer cannot threaten to go to another seller. However, the seller does always have the recourse of playing according to the rules, in which case he depends on the Weberian system's proper functioning. On the other hand, there are several potential buyers for the product. Although the list may have been cut down beforehand on the basis of past dealings, proven discretion, or personal relations, it is always possible to find a buyer willing to pay a higher price. To a certain extent, this inequality of position is overcome by the clandestine nature of the transaction. As the deal is basically illegal, the buyer has some leverage in threatening to 'go public' (that is, putting his trust in the rulebook) should the seller prove to be too greedy. Too much publicity would queer the deal and might even force it to 'go honest', in which case both seller and buyer lose.

For the corruptive entrepreneur, goods and services offered are as good as unique. Usually, there are no other acceptable alternatives. The only choice is whether or not to follow the rulebook, which is slow and results not guaranteed. The scale of bribery ranges from small payments

for a traffic violations to a large 'sweetener' for a lobbyist or governmental official in order to obtain a multi-million dollar contract. In attempting to provide hitherto unprecedented services for its citizens the modern state with welfare pretensions simultaneously creates monopoly niches. These are open to either good service or to intermittent/conditional service.[5]

Dependence on Good Governance

What is seldom recognised in most corruption studies is how much the corruptive entrepreneur is dependent upon a system of reasonably efficient distribution of public goods and services. In abstract terms, the gain is obtained by shortcutting or speeding up access to them. A system for providing these goods and services by government agencies must most often function efficiently, independent of the buyer and seller. The corruptor/seller profits from the temporary suspension of a more or less well-functioning access to public goods and services. On condition of receiving a commission/bribe by the buyer, these services are subsequently allowed to proceed. Once that bribe or commission is paid, then everyone, client/customer, corruptor/capitalist entrepreneur, and end users of public services all have an interest in seeing that the system functions smoothly.

A final point arguing for modification of the market model is its shared nature. The corruption bazaar is an integrated and nearly all-encompassing system in and of itself. After a certain point has been reached, it comes to dominate bureaucratic behaviour, a 'culture of corruption'. It is not just a matter of officials at various places in the bureaucratic hierarchy earning extra income via 'commissions', 'administrative fees', etc. Once established, the system becomes integrated in that any official benefiting from illicit income is expected, nay bound, to remit some part of that sum to his superiors as the price of allowing him or her to run the franchise. Hence, the official who takes too little in bribes or, horror of horrors, is honest, deprives higher officials of expected income justifiably claimed by right of position. In a reversal of the Weberian expectations, honesty is a liability rather than a standard.[6] The situation is illustrated in Diagram 1.

Even in its simplified form, Diagram 1 illustrates the system's integrated nature. Returns on even small bribes quickly escalate into substantial amounts at the middle and higher levels of the system. This gives it a longevity, continuity, and stability lacking in anti-corruption measures. Money flows up and status down. Each level of the system is dependent upon a percentage of the 'take' of the levels below. This weaves the myriad of individual dyadic ties into a tight-knit system. All

Diagram 1: Mutuality of Corrupt Practices
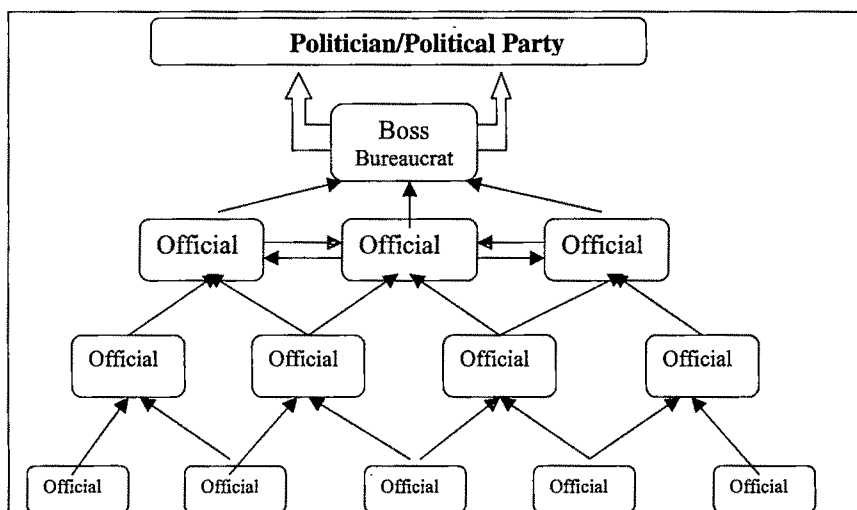
are locked into place by dependence on other levels. Should one of these refuse to accept or give her/his share of the bribes, everyone else in the system will suffer. Peer pressure is further increased by the fact that many have had to pay for the privilege of getting their franchise. Reasonably, they expect to reap the gains in order to recoup their expenses.

Family, Network, and Patronage

At this point it must be conceded that there are some features of corruption only tangentially in contact with the bazaar model. Under the telling term 'nepotism', a prominent one is the special treatment given to bureaucrats' family members, as well as to fellow members of the clan, caste, and status groups. Based as it is upon the idea of the 'economic person', the bazaar model does not wholly cover this area of dys-functional behaviour, which, in recent times, has become seemingly limitless. The most corrupt are those with the greatest amount of material welfare and largest incomes.[7] The capitalistic spirit of 'desire to acquire' has become a goal in and of itself; illegal/unethical methods are its instrument. It would seem that the corruption bazaar often has, at least, in these higher economic echelons, as much to do with power, status, and most of all control, as with financial gain *per se*. A well-known pheno-menon of the late and unlamented Soviet Union was to under-budget subordinates' departments or organisations. In order to meet the goals

set by the state, they were forced to make up the difference by extra-ordinary (bribery, extortion, threat) budgetary means. The price of superiors' seeing through their fingers was absolute loyalty to the boss. This gave her/him a built-in instrument for unseating ambitious, unwary, or deviating subordinates, a phenomenon no means foreign to the Indonesian case under the New Order. Keeping the boss happy becomes not only a potential source of wealth and power, but also a matter of survival.

Why not More?

If corruption is endemic to *homo economicus,* what hinders us from increasing the skimming until there is nothing left? If the prevalence of a 'culture of corruption' allows or even encourages individuals to participate in it, then would not absolute corruption in society tend to corrupt absolutely? Yet, despite some spectacular cases (Zimbabwe is one example), few countries are paralysed by corruption. Even fewer are affected to the point of being dysfunctional. In other words, there would seem to be an upper limit to corruption. Constraints do exist; three of the most obvious candidates can be mentioned in passing.

The first of these is religious and moral considerations.[8] A glance at any year's listing of corruption as measured by Transparency Perception Index reveals a negative correlation between specific religions and corruption. Russia (Greek Orthodox) shares the bottom category with The Philippines (Catholic) and Nigeria (Christian/ Islamic), as well as the Islamic societies of Iran, Somalia, and Indonesia. India (Hindu/ Islamic and secular) is not too far behind. Although the top of the Trans-parency Perception Index list, namely, those nations perceived as least corrupt, is dominated by the Nordic lands (cold as a countermeasure to corruption?), it also includes Singapore (Confucian/Buddhist), as well as New Zealand and the United States of America (both secular). The fact that the countries adhering to the revealed religions of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism – which share a basic concept of sin redeemable only by a God who cannot be influenced by human beings – are scattered throughout the Index argues that, at the national level, religion and corruption are not linked, at least not in any causal manner.

A possibly more feasible explanation of whatever limits exist to corruption is internal. Important in this context is the influence of the pecking order within an organisation. Two variants can be recognised. The first is a spin-off of the Indonesian saying 'as long as the boss is happy' (*asal Bapak senang*), the golden rule for all subjected to a boss. A basic threat to the boss's position is subordinates becoming too rich and

powerful. At a certain stage being too successful at gaining extra income, status, and power threatens the existing hierarchy. For his own protection, the boss must take measures to ensure his inferiors do not pass him by. One of the reasons Ne Win, the former dictator of Burma/ Myanmar, returned power to civil authorities in 1964 was that he caught his officers with their hand in the till. With access to seemingly limitless external finance came the inherent threat that this would allow them to grow too rich and powerful to control. The solution was to withdraw military control over the country, forcing subordinates back into soldiering on the salary provided by the army hierarchy, ultimately controlled by NeWin. Suharto applied a similar system in Indonesia. Of course, he himself had to curtail corruption of his subordinates, or at least keep it within reasonable bounds after he had become head of state.[9] The other variant can be described as 'honour among thieves'. One simply sets all officials to watch all others. Too much success by one leads to the downfall of the others, who are then more than willing to blow the whistle on the successful.[10]

A third category would be consciousness of the impact of unbridled corruption. As corruption consumes scarce resources for unproductive or non-productive ends, too much could lead to downfall of the system. To a great extent, the same holds for the fact that the corruption prevents necessary change in response to changing circumstances, a response vital to a nation's survival in the long run, as well as the over exploitation of the lower classes, that is, those that can only pay bribes but have no possibility of recouping their losses by receiving them. Researchers cited by a World Bank Report point to such a strategy as leading to a system of franchises of corruption in which '...the common factor was a self-restraint in the interests of maintaining power and control' (2003: 7). Spoils of office could be tolerated as long as they did not threaten the 'royal family' or the continued existence of the regime.[11] One of the explanations for increased corruption is the lack of such restraints during the last decade.

Historical Background

To the extent that our arguments for an all-encompassing culture of corruption borne primarily on a bazaar model are defensible, it raises the question of origins. As culture, social mores, history, and tradition are relevant to the study of corruption, one wants to know how such a situation could arise. More important, how did it come to govern an entire society? Here arguments must turn to the area studies approach and more specifically to include historical explanation. In this light,

Alatas' observation proves to be prophetic. Detrimental practices in countries of the Third World have '...been a continuous process having roots in the periods preceding modernisation and Western domination' (1968: 80). More important is that '... contemporary post-independence studies of corruption should be related to these preceding periods, to avoid lack of depth in analysis and explanation ...' (*ibid.*).

Clearly, public administrations in the nations emerging after World War II are direct descendents of the colonial bureaucracy. Modern public administration equivalents thus can be seen as local adoptions of the foreign bureaucratic model. It was 'foreign' in that the Europeans who staffed the higher echelons were part of the colonial power's bureaucratic network. Their modus of operation did not derive from Asian society; they only operated there. Although somewhat modified by local practice, basically, the aims, disciplinary sanctions, and promotional channels were part and parcel.of the administrative culture of the colonial power's Department of Colonies or equivalent of which they were a distant part. This meant that, with the spread of Weberian bureaucratic ideals in Europe, coupled with increasing numbers of technical services as public health, transportation and infrastructure, and defence, the 'European' side of the bureaucracy tended to a greater or lesser extent to imitate the ideals of a rational, neutral, and efficient administrative structure.

Yet, for the present, there is a more important consideration. This is how the ostensibly colonial European model – either through hands-on experience or emulation of what was clearly an effective system – came to develop into what can be seen as a culture of corruption today. Even more important, why did it happen? Honestly, we have no clue. However, there are several areas of potentially rewarding research, which might take us further.

The first area of research focuses upon the very success of the state-building exercise. Securing the physical territory from external threat and internal dissidence, in concert with the passing of the 'revolutionary generation', that is, the architects and builders of the new state, meant greatly reduced nationalistic élan. With it came the reduction of moral restraints to stealing from the new state or from one's fellow citizens.

After gaining independence in 1947, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru the state in India took control of not only the political but also the economic sphere and pursued the goal of economic growth with social justice. The only tools available for implementing the goals of the developmental state were the elaborate bureaucratic and legal structures left behind by the British, whose primary objective had been to maintain an exploitative colonial rule and were, thus, in conflict with the values, tempers, and aspirations of a newly independent, developing,

modernising country[12] (Gill 1998). But the die was cast and the bureau-
cratic apparatus multiplied rapidly with the expansion of the state's
functions. Unchecked proliferation of the bureaucracy and its functions,
in the context of a legal system framed by a colonial ruler and an
omnipresent state, led to the emergence of a politician-bureaucrat nexus
which was a fertile ground to collude for mutual benefit.

In 1969, Indira Gandhi succeeded in eliminating the old guard of the
ruling Congress Party who had tightly controlled the Party's purse
strings. This concentrated political power in her hands. It also opened a
new phase in efforts to regulate political and economic activity in general
and private sector in particular. Indira Gandhi expanded state control
with the introduction of the 'license-quota-permit raj'. This perhaps
represents a landmark in the spread of bureaucratic (and political)
corruption in India. Requiring that licenses, permits, and clearances had
to be obtained for setting up new industrial undertakings and expanding
the capacity of existing ones, coupled with complex import and export
regulations, gave the government extensive powers of patronage,
including delay and extortion.[13] These powers were and continue to be
exploited to the full by politicians and bureaucrats in collusion with one
another to their mutual benefit. Corruption became a pervasive pheno-
menon at all levels of the government (*ibid.*). Another development
crucial to the spread of corruption was the imposition of the Emergency
in mid-1975. It eroded the institutional checks on arbitrary exercise of
the state power. While the period of Emergency was short, ending in
January 1977, the damage done to the administrative culture of the
country was profound. In a sense, corruption became institutionalised
and legitimised as an integral part of the political and bureaucratic
culture.[14]

For Indonesia, the mid-1960s was the beginning of three decades of
authoritarian rule. They were characterised by a high degree of top-down
authority and a moderate amount of corruption. The latter existed outside
the sphere of the rapacious plunder of the state's finances by the 'royal
family' and their Sino-Indonesian cronies. Beginnings of a culture of
corruption can be traced to the 1980s and the liberalisation of the
economy. Lack of effective rules regulating what was allowed and not
allowed in the economic liberalisation led to greatly expanded
opportunities for graft. However, the real watershed of corruption comes
in the past decade of the 'Era of Reform' (*Reformasi*) after 1998, an era
that successfully coupled decentralisation and democratisation with high
levels of corruption. As neither the nation nor popular democracy was in
danger, it was a question of 'ask not what you can do for your country,
but what your country can do for you', that is, make you rich quickly.

A second research theme to pursue would be the mismatch between the modernity of new financial and technical instruments and ultra conservative (colonial) laws and ordinances, which regulate them. While the problem is shared by much of the world, it is exacerbated in countries tending toward corruption. Despite the fact that most of the financial instruments of fiddle such as hedge funds, sub-prime loans, packaging and reselling of debt-papers, etc. are legal, their power to disrupt the economy has been proven beyond all shadow of a doubt. In many cases these instruments spread to developing countries' financial systems, which is one of the reasons they, too, are victims of the current economic crisis. The difference is that in the newly developed countries instruments of control, regulation, or even termination are less robust, antiquated, un-popular, or all them. During the 1997-98 crisis, for example, Indonesian bankruptcy laws, dating from the 19th century as amended in 1938, proved to be inadequate. Hence, legal, but immoral and in the last analysis economically unsound, dealings could go further and more easily lead to out-and-out corruption in regions where corruption had already become of systematic proportions.

A third area of potential research would be to focus on the need to expand state control in order to achieve the goals of independence and development. The tools utilised were often those of the previous colonial masters. What previously might have been seen as corruption practiced only in the 'native enclaves', which were isolated from the running of the country by the colonial power, became integrated into the national political and economic life. The extension of controls further provided new avenues for marketing influence and information, as well as crashing the queue in the distribution of what came to be ever more sparse resources. The 'expansionary' post-colonial period laid the ground for rules, mores, and practices of the bazaar for corruption. These, in turn, became ever more integrated into the national economy, which the state was most concerned in establishing. The national economy was thereby 'infected' by the bazaar methods of the local enclaves. As a result, national political and economic life tended to incorporate (native) and personalise (read corrupt) mechanisms: the rational and modern were thus 'tainted' by the irrational. The 'corruption bazaar' was born!

A fourth line of research would be to see corruption as a way of ensuring that the world is more predictable, at least, to the actor. This can be seen as a perversion of the concept of the 'moral economy.' Actors hedge their bets by having more than one source of income. As in subsistence agriculture, one does not aim at maximising production through economies of scale, specialised monoculture, or a commitment to a single endeavour. Instead, one takes out insurance by cultivating

several sources of income. In case of the failure of one, the actor is able to survive from the yields of the other(s). In the context of the state bureaucracy, should an official's position be threatened or, more common these days, should his/her organisation be threatened, there are alternative sources of, albeit supplementary, income. These, in fact, may intermittently overshadow the regular income. There is, of course, the countervailing danger that the existence, if revealed, of the complementary income(s) may adversely affect the primary one. In that case the (perverted) moral economy carries the seeds of its own destruction.

To sum up, our argument rests on the importance of seeing corruption in terms other than a moralistic position as deviant behaviour from the Eurocentric, Weberian standard. Rather, it should be seen from within, as a more or less integrated system. To this end, we contend that the bazaar model provides an important approach. It must, however, be complemented with large doses of local cultural constraints and take into account unique historical developments. Among these would be the differential result of, say, decentralisation. Indonesia's recent and far-reaching decentralisation, both political and fiscal, has led if not to increased total corruption, at very least to its becoming spread throughout the archipelago. India has a strong federal government with a decentralised political and administrative structure, which, ironically, has also led to greater corruption. Indeed, it is such contrasts and similarities that make comparative studies so valuable.

Notes

1. The discussion in this paper is based on personal experiences and data collected by the authors in the course of various individual and joint research projects in India and Indonesia over the past decades.

2. In the run up to the International Corruption Day (December 9), leaders from a number of Indonesian organisations publicly marked their opposition to corruption. At the same time, they denied that it is part of Indonesian traditional culture. Chairwoman Marwah Daud Ibrahim (ICMI) claimed that there were no roots for corruption in the country's culture, citing the example of punishing even a prince for such acts in the ancient kingdom of Kediri. State minister for Administrative Reform Taufik Effendi said corruption is not part of the country's identity, which is supposed to be religious and able to differentiate between *halal* and *haram* (permitted and prohibited), good and bad, and right and wrong (TheJakartaPost.com, 10 December 2007).

    On the other hand, Hinduism has always had a more accommodative attitude towards human frailty (that is, a culture of corruption), which is coupled with a rather relaxed concept of sin. Hinduism takes favourable view of wealth (*artha*) and, in fact, it is treated as an object of veneration. In the *Arthashastra*, Kautilya emphasises that '... wealth and wealth alone, is important, in as much as *dharma* and *kama* depend upon *artha* for their realisation' (Shamasastry 1961: 12) Status, power, and wealth

are three manifest symbols of authority. Whosoever possesses one of these, strives to acquire the other two, even if it means flouting all norms and constraints in the process.

3. Corruption is rarely expressed as naked power, but is 'gift-wrapped' in indigenous idioms of reciprocity and hospitality. It communicates through the idiom of live and let live. The Hindi expression *mera bhi dhyan rakhiye* (please keep me too in mind) says it all.

4. Giving 'speed money' for quicker handling of affairs is a recognised practice in both India and Indonesia. While in these instances corruption helps to speed up matters and to obtain favourable decisions, the practice also promotes a culture where nothing moves without payment of money. It has been argued that such corruption enhances efficiency of the system. Such arguments are not only 'fallacious but highly pernicious' because while 'bribe does benefit a few, it vitiates the whole system' (Gill 1998: 266).

5. Intermittent/conditional is the keyword for dysfunctional practices.

6. Some simple practices that one takes for granted, such as being ethical in day-to-day situations, or believing in the rule of law in everyday behaviour, are frequently absent.

7. The Suharto family could not spend its ill-gotten gains if they all lived a thousand years. Even more striking is some of the staggering pension funds accrued in the European Union by legal means, but ones, which cannot reasonably be consumed by the agent nor by definition can be passed on to heirs.

8. This is an aspect, which requires a detailed discussion, particularly from the Weberian protestant ethic viewpoint.

9. According to *The Economist* (2008), a similar phenomenon has prodded the Russian president and prime minister into taking steps to curb corruption, which in the long run threatens the standing order, that is, their own power.

10. A good example is the Dutch East India Company. During the period 1604-1799, a balanced hierarchy of power/corruption prevailed. In the case of colonial India, the early part of the East India Company rule was marked by rapacious greed and corruption until the appointment of Lord Cornwallis as Governor General in 1786, who strove to reform the system he inherited. He did succeed in bringing down the level of corruption, but a lesser kind of corruption lingered on.

11. Many argue that, with the disappearance of Ibu Tin, Suharto was no longer able to control the rampant pillaging by his cronies and, more important, his family. The Suharto franchise system of corruption was what brought about ultimate downfall of the regime.

12. Towards the end of his life, Nehru realised that this was one of the gravest errors made by him.

13. This meant that bureaucrats prevailed over the granting licenses and permits for new undertakings, giving them access to greater economic resources. Corrupt bureaucrats made use of this power, akin to *veto power*, to demand bribes and other 'benefits' from the entrepreneurs. Corruption, thus, came to be seen as a 'fast lane' of administrative decisions for those who were willing to pay bribes, as well as for those accepting them.

14. In fact, corruption is pervasive in Indian institutions; close to one per cent of the country's GDP is lost to bribes alone. There prevails a sense of public apathy for law and order, a fractured sense of public good, and corruption across all sections of Indian society (Raghunathan, 2006). 'The money influence on democracy is eating into our moral fibre. People now think corruption is natural and normal' (A.B. Bardhan quoted in Dasgupta 2009: 39).

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D.P. Mukerji and the Middle Class in India

Dalia Chakrabarti

This paper seeks to understand Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji's ideas about the origin and composition of the Indian middle class, his critical evaluation of its modernising role in pre- and post-independent India. For Mukerji, the failure of this class to develop an integrated personality, combining potentialities of both Indian tradition (representing sociality) and western modernity (represent-ing individualism), explains its failure to be a true agent of modernisation in India. He suggests that awareness on the part of westernised alienated middle-class Indian intellectuals of the need for exploring the vitality of indigenous culture would eventually connect them with the common Indians, who live by tradition. Only a de-alienated middle class with integrated personality can bring about changes in the lives of majority of people – a must for remaking totality of society.

[Keywords: middle class; modernisation; personality; socialism; tradition]

Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji (1894–1961), one of the founding fathers of Indian sociology, spoke and wrote extensively on the Indian middle class. 'DP', as he was fondly called, found this class crucial for the remaking of Indian society and culture in a desired way. Being a very sensitive person, he was always deeply influenced by the social milieu around him. 'In my view', he wrote, 'the thing changing is more real and objective than change *per se*' (Mukerji 1958: 241). He witnessed the rise of fascism, World War II, intense nationalist movement of the 1930s and 1940s, the beginning of workers' and peasants' struggles in India, and the independence and partition of India. He wrote, 'I strongly plead for the study of sociology at this crisis of humanity' (Mukerji 1946: 10).

A substantial part of his intellectual preoccupation included his understanding of the contradictions in the middle-class character and the inherent limitations of its designs and efforts. He had suggestions as to

how this class could fulfil its social role. In his earlier works –
Personality and the Social Sciences (1924) and *Basic Concepts in
Sociology* (1932) – his concern was the intellectual life of the middle
class. But, in later works – *Modern Indian Culture: A Sociological Study*
(1942) – it was its politics that absorbed him. According to P.C. Joshi
(1986: 1467), DP's most valuable contribution in terms of approach to
culture was his identification of the Indian middle class as the key to an
understanding of the modern Indian culture. For DP, this class was a
product of the colonial economic policy, on the one hand, and social and
educational policy, on the other. This non-productive (unlike the industrial
bourgeoisie of the West) and non-commercial (unlike the traditional
Indian bourgeoisie) class played significant roles in Indian history: (a) it
contributed to the consolidation of the British rule, (b) it led a successful
nationalist struggle against that very regime, (c) it launched a socialist
struggle, (d) it brought about Partition of the country, and (e) it became
the main force behind planned social change in post-independent India.

A critical analysis of this class was a personal problem for DP, as to
a certain extent he could identify himself with this English-educated
section of the country. Thus, for him, the Weberian bureaucratic
dichotomy between 'personal' and 'public' was not important. He
lamented that the westernised modern secular individuals or *vyaktis*, that
is, atomised beings failed to develop themselves into 'persons' or
purushas, that is, those endowed with an integrated personality. For
development of personality, a synthesis of the twin process of
individualisation and socialisation of uniqueness of individual life was
required. The exposure of the middle class to western bourgeois
education and values made its members conscious individuals. However,
its distance from Indian tradition, which, for DP, was essentially social in
nature, not only made this class poor in terms of collectivistic
orientation, but also cut it off from the majority of Indian population,
who lived by tradition. DP believed that only a synthetic science like
sociology could provide a corrective for these shortcomings. He
perceived sociology in India as a comprehensive, truthful, life-centred,
and integrated knowledge capable of playing a critical and reconstructive
role under the leadership of traditionally anchored and adequately
modernised middle-class intelligentsia.

The Origin of Middle Class

DP's understanding of the origin of middle class in India can only
become meaningful in the backdrop of his conceptualisation of the
traditional Indian society and culture. For him, the new middle class was

an artificially generated category, not duly anchored in Indian tradition and culture. The peculiarity of its origin prevented this class to become a true agent of progress in Indian society.

DP perceived Indian tradition as a social and historical process. Indian culture represented certain common traditions that had given rise to a number of general attitudes. The major influences in their shaping had been Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and western commerce and culture. It was through the assimilation and conflict of such varying forces that Indian culture became what it is today, neither Hindu nor Islamic, neither a replica of the western modes of living and thought nor a purely Asiatic product (Mukerji 1948: 1). Tradition might change due to internal or external pressures. External pressures were mostly economic in nature like changes in the mode of production. In India, such a change occurred only after British colonisation. He said, '... unless the economic force is extraordinarily strong ... traditions survive by adjustments. The capacity for adjustment is the measure of the vitality of traditions' (1958: 232). DP found Marx's materialistic understanding of history useful to analyse Indian tradition and its changes. Thus, culture was understood with reference to the material conditions of life. Yet DP did not deny autonomy to culture. That, under conditions of economic retrogression, India produced a Tagore and a cultural renaissance was, for him, an affirmation of the principle that a people thwarted in the material sphere could assert their cultural creativity and rise to great heights in the non-material sphere (Joshi 1986: 1467).

At the time of British arrival, which radically altered, in DP's words, 'the very basis of the Indian social economy' (1948: 24), Hindus and Muslims had not yet achieved full synthesis of traditions at all levels of social existence. They agreed at the civilisational level, that is, regarding the use and control of natural resources, but at the cultural level, that is, regarding aesthetic and religious traditions, and more particularly, in the tertiary traditions of conceptual thought, the contradiction and antagonism continued. In this situation of arrested assimilation, the British moved in with their totally alien form of economy based on money and mechanical production. They destroyed indigenous merchant capital, trade and commerce, self-sufficient rural economy, and traditional panchayat. They introduced new land-settlement based on the concepts of private property and profit, generated physical and occupational mobility in a hitherto more or less static society, and imposed on Indians an educational system with English as the medium of instruction. The new land-revenue system produced the category of absentee landlords – the main pillar of strength of British in rural India. These landlords remained divorced from both agricultural productivity and responsibility

towards the villagers. Similarly, English education gave birth to a class, who would support the colonial masters and were psychologically and socially distant from the majority of Indians who did not know English. These two classes – the landlords and the literati formed the new middle class, who were absolutely alienated from the language and culture of people. They were different from the bourgeoisie of the West, as the industrial bourgeoisie in Europe arose out of its own feudal and commercial order (Mukerji 1942: 82). The British rule in India resulted in the liquidation of an established middle class (for example, the *Sethis*) and 'the emergence of a spurious middle class' (Mukerji 1948: 25). The rootlessness of the middle class made it a 'counterfeit class' and, there-fore, its handiwork in the social domains of education, culture, and politics as well as economy was bound to be spurious in quality. It would be unrealistic, DP asserted, to expect that such an 'elite' would lead an independent India along the path of genuine modernisation.

The Activity

Nineteenth Century Reformism

The new middle-class, generated in the course of changes introduced in Indian society by the East India Company, in the first instance, and then by the British colonisers, became the main agent of modernisation in India. DP found that, in India, modernisation had been equated with westernisation, and that too not in its fullest form, but as mere Anglicisation (1958: 247). Indian intellectuals got the exposure to modern West only through English language. DP duly noted the new elite's deep fascination for English language. Even when writing in the vernacular, they used to process their ideas first in English and translate them into their mother tongue. This indicated their split personality. It was another thing that this split personality was most suited to creative work (*ibid.*). Possibly, DP himself was a victim of it.

This middle class, with all its characteristic contradictions, wanted to modernise Indian society, obviously following the western or, more specifically, the Victorian English model of development. It was heavily influenced by the western liberal notions of progress and equality. The values cherished in England – materialistic and secular values as against Indian spiritualism, individualism as against traditional Indian collectivistic orientation, reason rather than faith, and utilitarianism or instrumentalism – were deliberately upheld. Its ideas of social progress were coterminous with the British rule in India, if only a little less rigid

and a little more sympathetic in the matter of high appointments (Mukerji 1946: 48-50).

DP did not question the intention of 19th century middle-class reformers. But the alienated intellectuals lacked an adequate understanding about the life of the people they wanted to change. So their almost romantic endeavour largely failed. The outcome of their missionary zeal to reform Indian people in conformity with Victorian ideas of progress was 'a tension leading to a cleft culture and split personality' (Mukerji 1958: 167). While acting as agents of change, they were under three major historical constraints: (i) the fact that economic and political power belonged to foreigners, (ii) the obduracy and resilience of tradition, and (iii) contradiction in their middle-class character.

DP's critique of reformers stemmed from the fact that he had a conception of progress very different from the western evolutionist notion, upheld by middle-class reformers. DP did not conceive progress as a natural phenomenon. He believed in 'purpose' in the life of human beings. Development, for him, was not the same as growth, but a broader process of unfolding of potentialities signifying development of personality. For him, the basic precondition for personality development was freedom, which, in turn, was the essence of progress. Personality was 'free and spontaneous' in the sense that it was 'self-impelled, self-determined, and self-limited' (Mukerji 1924: 38). Freedom could be understood in three senses: freedom from the constraint of time, from social interference, and from social control. Without mentioning explicitly, DP followed Marx and Hegel in this. For him, person had to be free from the necessity of remaining in social contact for every moment of his life. Hence, leisure was important, as it alone could conquer the tyranny of time. Obstacles to leisure, including the demands of a busy social life, were often mistaken for progress. These obstacles, DP maintained, should be removed for the development of inner personality of man. He cherished the Hindu philosophy for its insistence on free time for contemplation everyday. There was even a socially prescribed stage of life, namely, *vanprastha*, when human beings got retirement from their busy social life. In the traditional Hindu way of life, as prescribed in *chaturashrama,* individuals had to go through intense social life to ultimately reach a stage, when, through constant meditation, self-realisation would become possible.

The emphasis on Him was no negation of personality. The Him was a humanised divinity: 'I am He, and He is myself', which, argued DP, 'is the most aggressive assertion of Personality that can be imagined' (1932: 145). Hence, the individual could develop his personality in and through society and then, at last, he might come out of it as an autonomous being.

The personality that developed was not one of the 'individual' or '*vyakti*' which was indicative of an 'against' relation with society, but that of the 'person' or '*purusha*', 'living in groups through stages of growth until one was to be so socialised that freedom would have become coterminous with existence and institutions turned into agencies of growth' (Mukerji 1958: 229).

Unlike the middle-class idea of progress in materialistic terms, DP believed that progress entailed balancing of values; so was modernisation (Mukerji 1932: 15). Values were essentially hierarchical in nature. So, there must be a quest for ultimate, fundamental values. He turned to Upanishads in search of the values like *shantam, shivam,* and *advaitam,* that is, values of peace, welfare, and unity. *Shantam* is the principle of harmony which sustains the universe amidst all its changes. *Shivam* is the principle of co-ordination in the social environment. And *advaitam* is the principle of unity which transcends diverse forms of state, behaviour, and conflicts, and permeates thought and action with ineffable joy (Mukerji 1924: 35). Progress, for him, entailed the development of personality through conscious realisation of these ultimate values.

DP identified a few positive consequences of reformers' attempts. They were successful in bringing about some changes in people's attitude to life and to others. This was reflected in 19th century popular literature. Man, replacing god, became the central character in numerous literary works. Human relationships, even tension between husband and wife, problem of dowry, plight of social marginals like widows, pavement-dwellers, and rickshaw-pullers, which hitherto remained totally outside the purview of any aesthetic pursuit, were, for the first time, brought into the forefront.

Nationalist Movement

The next attempt to change India was initiated by the nationalists. It was again a middle-class pursuit. Initially pro-British in its attitude, the middle class felt being cheated by the British when it found that industry, trade, and commerce, and even government employment went out of their hands. Hence, for DP, Indian nationalism was a by-product of frustration of the Indian middle class. Previously, this class looked down upon Indian tradition. Its vision was then coloured by the colonisers' perception of Indian culture. Now it started glorifying it. DP critiqued the colonial tactics of making Indians preoccupied with their past and thereby diverting their attention from the real problems of social life they faced everyday under the colonial rule. Just like the liberal view of reformers, the whole idea of nationalism was western in origin. The

Indian middle class converted it into a religion of politics to substitute the age-old *samajdharma*, but without developing the corresponding *achar*s (normative practices), which alone could make it meaningful for the generality of the people (Mitra 1979: 251). DP complained that national movement had actually been anti-intellectual in nature. Not only had there been much unthinking borrowing from the West, there had also emerged a hiatus between theory and practice, as a result of which thinking had become impoverished and action ineffectual. As he was always concerned with intellectual and artistic creativity, DP concluded: 'politics has ruined our culture' (1958: 190).

Nationalism entailed an idea of national unity. Nationalists tried to develop an artificial national all-India culture without giving honour to the specificity of various regional cultures. The traditional Indian philosophy focused on a spiritual universe. What was required, for DP, was a happy balance between the needs of regional cultures and those of the national culture. After all, DP argued, Indian culture was more a union than a unity; the higher levels of its unity could be reached through the union (not the fusion) of the distinctive cultures of nationalities in different regions. Just like the reformers, nationalists remained dissociated from the people. Nationalism was basically a middle-class ideal that was imposed on the common people. The Indian nationalists, though very often glorify Indian tradition, did not properly recognise its vitality to bring about change in people's lives. Proof of the failure lay in the fact that, immediately after independence, there was gloom and despondency and the new state of India was facing the acute problem of nation-building. The problem of communalism appeared as a major obstacle. The immediate danger, DP said, was civil hatred. It might, he apprehended, take the form of Hindu or Muslim revivalism.

DP identified a contradiction in the attitude of the nationalists. They were radical in politics but conservative and revivalist in social thought and practice (Mukerji 1946: 52). The middle-class family structure still remained feudal and patriarchal in nature. Even caste considerations played a crucial role in their lives. Changes in the family life, status of women, village economy, caste system, etc. had no doubt occurred, but their pace was much slower than what the middle-class youth thought should be in the political domain. Thus, to DP, there was a 'note of unreality into our nationalism' (*ibid.*: 60). The nationalists ignored the fact that the depressed classes and the Muslims were the economic have-nots and the 'social protestants in the history of Indian culture' (*ibid.*: 63). His solution was that the new Indian state must undertake a material programme in which the interest of the Indian people, going beyond all their differences, should be given priority.

Socialist Movement

Since the second decade of the 20th century, socialist movement of the
Soviet variety started gaining ground. Here again, the leadership was
provided by the middle class. By that time, the middle class was
internally divided into the upper and the lower middle-class. The lower
middle-class was worst hit by urban unemployment and rural chronic
under-employment. Thus, a new category of educated unemployed
persons was created. Frustration led them to embrace socialism to find
out and establish an alternative form of society. They launched a *kisan-
mazdoor* (peasant-labour) movement and tried to link up India's destiny
with the world's progressive forces. The first objective failed, as the rate
of industrialisation in India, despite war, had been very slow. The latter
attempt seemed to have fallen between two stools, the hatred for British
imperialism and an uncritical appreciation of the Soviet achievements.
The consequence of the latter was evident in the policy of exclusion of
Communists from the Congress ranks and the campaign of their
vilification.

The Indian communists, DP appreciated, honestly sought to reach
out to the exploited class of workers and peasants and tried hard to
mobilise them on socialistic lines. They offered a new value system and
a new image of society characterised by class inequality and class
conflict. Compared to previous agents of change, they were more
realistic in their approach, but the hiatus between them and the common
people of India still remained. They made a mechanical and blind
application of Marxist principles on the Indian situation, totally
disregarding its specificities. DP rightly commented that the Indian
Marxists were universalistic in their orientation. He had no doubt that
Indian communists were *communists,* but he questioned the authenticity
of their *Indian* identity. They completely overlooked Indian tradition
without enquiring into the logic of its operation and its hold over the
masses. A lack of sense of reality of the communist youth came from an
overweening optimism, a blind faith in the Soviet ideals and practices. In
an overly hierarchical caste society, communism had a natural appeal, as
it was outwardly rational and fair. But, if communism disturbed the
traditional makeup of the Indian mind, as it wanted to do, it would be
rejected as an impracticable and undesirable alternative (Mukerji 1924:
127).

According to DP, India had always been ruled by *samajdharma* as
revealed in the *srutis* and as perpetuated by the *smritis*. Caste
*panchayat*s, *shrenis*, *pugas*, *samuhas*, etc., had been the ultimate
repository of power in India, the monarch being only the agent of *samaj-*

dharma. Priests were the interpreters of *dharma,* and they slowly changed the tradition without offence. Thus, the fundamental unity achieved was socio-religious in character. The consequence of this socio-religious homogeneity of interest was the humanisation of social control. Hence, the situation in India was not favourable to the emergence of a system of social control like that in the West. A system of self-culture by direct realisation, with the assistance of a *guru* was the keynote of the Hindu culture of personality, which was different from the communistic culture of collective guidance by an impersonal authority. Following the traditional Indian principles *samajdharma* was ultimately to be sub-ordinated to *swadharma*, without which the individual could not become a real king in his own kingdom (Mukerji 1932: 148). Hence, in DP's words, 'before communism is introduced, national memory will have to be smudged and new habits acquired' (1924: 136).

Five-Year Planning

Failing to realise its new interests, nationalist or socialist, the Indian middle class was driven by discontent and was staggered. It suffered from a new sense of guilt and impotence. But, instead of overcoming its latent 'fear of the people', it sought to 'cover its shame in the loudness of the arriviste's assertion or by a cloying complacency' (Mukerji 1948: 205). That marked the modern Indian culture till the British left India, handing over the state power and the administration to the middle class. The final wave of change began in this post-independence era with the initiation of Five-Year Planning.

In 1953, DP wrote a paper on 'Man and Plan in India' (1958: 30-76). He noted that plans were formulated primarily by the middle class with the backing of state power behind them. To understand the nature of planning and its success or failure in bringing about change in Indian society one must examine the nature of the newly formed state of India. It was a democratic state with an objective to realise socialistic pattern of society through planning. But, ultimately, DP lamented, it remained a class state with some welfare measures for the toiling masses. Contradictions in the plans were very apparent. In the unformulated psychology of the plan, DP located the fact that the two sets of incentives – those relating to private enterprise and private profit and those relating to social good and welfare – were sometimes held to co-exist as in a mixed economy, to grow each on its own and supplement each other. At other times, it was expected that the incentives of private profit and property will be somehow transmuted into social profit, welfare, etc. This kind of confusion, DP believed, could be removed only by

introducing a cultural perspective, a vision into the plan: a vision which informed people about the historical fact that capitalist era was over. The psychological counterpart of this vision was recognition of the historical fact that human nature might change and the plan had to be modified accordingly (*ibid.*).

There was a disjunction between the vision (the ideology and values of *Bahujan Hitay Bahujan Sukhah* underlying the plan), on the one hand, and the institutional pattern, allowing free play to forces of acquisitive society, on the other. This disjunction was the source of deep inner crisis of the planning process and the cause of its incapacity to tap India's cultural traditions of subordinating private gain to collective good. Plans did not provide the common Indian population with a clear-cut vision of the future Indian society. Thus, common people could not be motivated; hence, they did never feel enthusiastic about it. Sectional interest of the middle class was found crystallised in these plans, particularly in the first Five-Year Plan. DP noted that the text of the Plan did not

> signify an umbilical contact with the life of the people, and the resultant appreciation of the forces that move them, and the analysis of these forces, both endogenous and exogenous, in the light of local actualities including traditions, institutions, myths, beliefs, ideas and symbols.... People's will, desires, hopes and aspirations do not seem too well up through these pages; no analysis merges its cautious subtleties in the depths of historical understanding; no idea soars up the facts in its talons (*ibid.*: 53).

For DP, planning was not just a technocratic task, but a cultural one. He pointed out that planners were totally unlike the *gurus* of traditional India. They were the social and technical engineers, experts in various fields, and bureaucrats. DP located the problem of planning in the 'warped, disrupted or fragmented personalities' of planners, who were preoccupied with 'fishing facts out of the stream of reality and sterilising them from possible contamination of values' (*ibid.*: 67). Dissociated from the people, and with knowledge that was 'separated from knowing' and knowing that was 'quarantined from living', or what Marxists would call 'action', the middle-class planners were too alienated to make the Plans a success and build up a culture, which was a joint human endeavour, in which the individual, an anarchic being, could really become a 'person', the whole or the concrete.

According to DP, planners were rich in secular knowledge, but poor in religious ethics and aesthetics. Their middle-class background explained their extremely westernised attitude. Values underlying Plans were the same alien western values of rationality, materialism, and

utilitarianism. The main objective of the planning had been to develop a new kind of men who were rich in secular sense but deficient in spiritual power. Emphasis was laid on professionalism and development of a functional personality. Thus, the risk of dehumanisation was very much there.

DP blamed the failure of our intellectuals to comprehend the whole process of personality development in terms of continuity and contradiction. In India, the common man was still a person, a whole, a more integrated and more humanly cultivated than the English educated, westernised individuals. Though neglected by the middle class, it was the values of Indian tradition, which had held the society together so far, in spite of the vicissitudes of political changes. The historicity of the Indian social system in this sense lay in the very continuity of its normative system, the traditions, the store of values or *dharma* that they held, maintained, and continued.

Planners, according to DP, should adopt a holistic perspective and understand development in a comprehensive manner involving organisation of commensurate values in tune with Indian tradition. DP lamented, 'I have seen how our progressive groups have failed in the field of intellect, and hence also in economic and political action, chiefly on account of their ignorance of and un-rootedness in India's social reality' (1958: 240). Planners were experts, no doubt, but experts in highly specialised knowledge. Hence, they could not appreciate unity of knowledge that sociology could offer. For DP, sociological knowledge would be very useful while remaking Indian society and culture through intelligent adaptation to and assimilation of new forces in the light of reinterpreted past (1952: 13). DP, however, appreciated some principles adopted by the planners like gradualness of change, emphasis on science and technology, and advisability of mixed economy. But he was very much aware of the major hindrances in the process of implementation of plans like bureaucratic inefficiency, corruption, and unimaginativeness of Indians. By 1959, DP had completely lost his faith in the planning process.

Mode of Change

Apart from being critical of the modernising ideal of the middle class, DP also pointed out the loopholes in the choice of its very modalities of modernising India. The middle-class individuals adopted an artificial exogenous mode. For this DP squarely blamed their inability to develop into persons or *purusha*s. The relationship of *purusha* and society, free of the tension that characterised the relationship between the individual and

the group, was, DP maintained, the key to understanding Indian society in terms of tradition (*ibid.*: 235). Indian tradition was not a static reality. It continuously assimilated diverse elements within its fold and then traditionalised all these. Initial conflict was culminated in accommodation of old and new. Synthesis had been the dominant organising principle and the Hindu, the Buddhist, and the Muslim had together shaped a world-view in which, according to DP, the fact of Being was of lasting significance. He referred to *Upanishadic* principle of *charaiveti* or keep-moving-forward to denote the changes in Indian tradition. There had developed an indifference to 'the transient and the sensate' and a preoccupation with the subordination of 'the little self' to and ultimately its dissolution in 'the Supreme Reality' (Mukerji 1948: 2). DP called this world-view the mystical outlook.

According to DP, each culture had its own mechanism of change. Indian tradition had *sruti, smriti,* and *anubhava* as the typical mechanisms. *Sruti* implied listening, while *smriti* meant memorising. *Anubhava* was the personal experience or realisation of an individual, which gradually became collective experience or a feeling of larger number of people. These traditional indigenous means were never utilised by the Indian middle class. In the absence of 'extraordinarily strong' economic changes, 'community' in India had not yet decomposed totally into a 'society'. The emerging class conflict was smothered and covered by caste-traditions, and the common man still lived in and through group-traditions, the *samajdharma* or *sampradaya parampara*. As majority of people lived by tradition, changes initiated by the middle class were never intimate to the people. As the middle class did not have confidence in tradition, they failed to gain the confidence of common Indians, whom they wanted to modernise. DP wanted the middle class to be de-alienated (not exactly following Marx's prescription of it), so that they would be able to reach the common man. His prescription was 'conscious adjustment to Indian traditions and symbols' (*ibid.*: 215), for 'culture can not be "made" from scratch' (*ibid.*: 214).

Unlike a revivalist, DP was strongly in favour of a concordance between the old and the new, between the Indian and the western. Genuine modernisation was not possible through imitation of West as proposed by the middle-class elite. DP was afraid of cultural imperialism. He appreciated Rammohan Roy and Rabindranath Tagore for their attempt to synthesise Indian and western traditions (Mukerji 1958: 33). DP's characterisation of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Tagore was very interesting. For him Chatterjee absorbed the then current thought of England. Initially, Chatterjee's grounding in Indian thought was weak and later Chatterjee favoured neo-Hindu resurgence.

Like Michael Madhusudan Dutta, Chatterjee remained a divided being. Tagore, on the other hand, was more deeply involved with Indian tradition. Hence, Tagore could absorb West more (1972: 75-76).

DP, T.N. Madan thinks, would have agreed with Michael Oakeshott that the principle of tradition 'is a principle of continuity' (2007: 281). DP perceived tradition as a facility for rather than an obstacle to modernisation. New values and institutions must have soil in which to take root and from which to imbibe character. Obviously there was a possibility of conflict between the old and the new. But conflict was merely the intermediate stage in the dialectical triad, which ultimately paved the way towards a synthesis. Unlike Marx, DP did not believe in historical inevitability of synthesis of opposites. He said that a self-conscious choice-making was necessary in this regard. Self-consciousness was the form of modernisation. Its content was composed of nationalism, democracy, utilisation of science and technology for controlling nature, planning for socio-economic development, cultivation of rationality, etc. Typical modern man, for him, was engineer – social and technical. Scholars like Karl Popper (1963: 122) and D.M. Schneider (1974: 205) also think that new meanings were established with reference to old meanings. DP even criticised Gandhi for his failure to indicate the ways of absorbing new social forces, which the West had released (Mukerji 1958: 35). He found Gandhi's idea of *Ramrajya* a vulgarised notion. He maintained that it was not only non-historical, even anti-historical in nature (*ibid.*: 38). But he duly noted that Gandhian insistence on traditional values might help to save India from evils like scientism and consumerism to which West had fallen prey (*ibid.*: 227).

DP called for social action to push on the dialectics of conservative forces of tradition and new forces of westernisation and asked the middle class to push it further consciously and collectively into the next higher stage of social development, where personality was integrated through planned, socially directed collective endeavour for historically under-stood ends, that is, a socialist order of society (*ibid.*: 76). He appreciated westernisation to the extent it led to the emergence of class conscious-ness, which would mark India's emancipation from primordial loyalties of religion and caste (1948: 216).

Madan (2007: 275) has criticised DP for remaining silent on class conflict. His optimism was the sanguine hope of an Indian liberal intellectual rather the fiery conviction of a Marxist revolutionary. In fact, class system did not displace caste system in India. They did not even co-exist in compartments. They combined but did not fuse. DP preferred accommodation of various conflicting loyalties within the national

framework. And many African and Asian states with pluralistic cultural pattern find this strategy both feasible and advantageous.

Although class society was a major step forward, DP wanted India to move beyond it as the prospects of personality development were not equally distributed in a class society. Actually, he negated the merits of both the western type of social control by class and the typical Indian caste type control. A socialist society for him would ensure better development of personalities of all members of society. In caste society there was excessive social control, whereas in class society emphasis was on individual at the cost of society. Ideally, in a socialist society, sociality would be highlighted. For DP, Indians would reach this stage again under the leadership of the middle class. Unlike the Marxist position, he categorically stated during the 1950s that leadership from proletariat and peasantry in India was not yet in sight. But this time he hoped that the middle-class leaders of socialist movement would realise the fact that remaking a society would be impossible without popular participation in the process of change. Hence, the middle-class leaders must be able to mobilise the common people. Their success would depend on their ability to de-alienate themselves, that is, to get over their overly westernised mindset and to get in touch with their cultural roots in Indian tradition.

DP favoured development of creative civic sense. Controlling authority had to be vested in people who, instead of being interested in controlled development of others, would be interested in their own development in accordance with the principle of self-culture or *swaraj* to be *swarat* or kings of their own selves. Only creative civic sense gave rise to a feeling of disinterested love and fellowship among people. New society had to be built upon the premise of tradition. Tradition acted positively as a check upon the hasty process of westernisation in India. Hence, capitalism in India was still underdeveloped. And this backwardness of capitalist development would be of a great help to move towards a higher level, that is, the socialist level, which, unlike western culture, required the active participation of all, and stood, if rightly constructed, in the interest of development of personality of all. But DP never believed that socialist society was the final stage of progress. Unlike Marx's emphasis on violent revolution, DP said that it might be resorted to in the last instance only, as the Indian temperament was more in tune with evolution. Through planned social change the stage of socialistic society could be reached.

Criticism and Defence

A.K. Saran (1962) has criticised DP for his preference for socialist society as conducive to the development of personality and social progress in India. According to Saran, a totalitarian society was always antithetical to the development of personality and a technology-oriented society was bound to be exploitative and anti-man in nature. DP himself acknowledged Saran's suspicion. He wrote in 1932 that the idea of personality, as was cherished by Marx and Gorky, was not realised in Stalinist Russia. There was dominance of bureaucracy and party. He even criticised Marxists like Lenin, Bukharin, and Trotsky for making the 'laws of dialectics' behave like the 'laws of *karma*', that is, pre-determining every fact, event, and human behaviour in its course, or else, they were held forth as a moral justification for what was commonly described as opportunism (Mukerji 1945: 18). But there was no logical antithesis between personality and socialism, particularly if socialism stood for reconstruction of a society of individuals functioning collectively in society and yet coming out of it as persons.

Saran further criticised DP for his failure to harmonise Vedantic, western liberal, and Marxist principles. DP admitted it when he described his life to Saran as 'a series of reluctances' (Saran1962: 162). Actually, for DP, sociology in India should play an instrumental role in such unification. DP just talked about establishment of inter-linkage or union through which all three elements were harnessed together to make a new composite culture. He strongly hoped for Indian middle class to embrace such culture.

The philosophical approach which DP wished to cultivate was that of rationalism. Reason, for DP, was a tool not only for understanding, but also to develop personality (Madan 1997: 171). Madan assumes that DP was under the influence of Hegel. It was evident in DP's concern with reason and human dignity, his attitude towards past, his longing for preserving whatever was judged as valuable in it, and his fascination with dialectics. These might also be taken from Hindu Upanishadic tradition. Madan writes, 'It would seem that what DP was most conscious of in his earlier writings was the need to establish links between traditional culture, of which he was a proud though critical inheritor, and modern liberal education, of which he was a critical though admiring product' (Madan 2007: 272). He was attracted by the image of the future which the West held out to traditional societies, but, at the same time, he was attached to his own tradition, the basis of which was the Hindu heritage (*ibid.*). DP, Madan argues, did not specify how Vedantic principles and western notion of progress, traditional Indian culture and

modern liberal education could be synthesised by the middle-class leadership in India. DP evaded a closer examination of nature and validity of synthesis; its existence was assumed and self-validating.

There were contradictions in DP's ideas about the role of the middle class in Indian history. Once, he said that the exclusive role of the middle class was over, and they must join the common people now. But, in another context, he assigned them the vital role of an agent of social change. This was required, he maintained, due to the incapacity of Indian working-class and peasantry. But it was in absolute contradiction with the Marxist position on the role of the middle class in history. It also revealed how DP slipped into the fallacy of intellectuals. He himself being part of the middle-class intelligentsia could not deny it a crucial role in history. He was, to an extent, utopian as he conceived the possibility of camaraderie between the middle class and the common people. For this to happen, DP argued, middle class must acquire certain qualities of mind. First of all, they had to be 'persons', synthesising traditional sociality with modern individuality. They must combine (a) Brahmanic detachment or the detachment of an intellectual with a sense of poetic universalism, which he found in Tagore, and (b) pragmatic socialism, which would enable them to address the cause of socialist transformation philosophically.

Abhijit Mitra (1979) ponders why DP was so interested in the development middle-class personality, which practically led him to the question of both social and sociological transformation of India. DP, like any middle-class intellectual, suffered from, in his own words, Hamletian alienation. To explain and to get over such alienation he came to sociology. In an autobiographical note he wrote, '... soon after I began to think for myself it was also borne in upon me that I was an Indian, that I could not but be an Indian, that I could develop my personality only by understanding Indian culture' (1958: 228-29). Sociology connected the root of the trouble to his membership in the Indian middle-class and his education in the anglicised culture and consequent dissociation from the people at large. Mitra (1979: 259-60) points out that DP, being an Indian, could not but have in-built sociality within his self. But his middle-class background stood in his way to reach out to the people. He solved this tension by associating himself intellectually with people, whom he considered to be more integrated and humanely cultivated than the English educated, westernised middle-class. Furthermore, he did not commit the typical middle-class mistake of neglecting Indian tradition, which he studied in terms of both its continuity and change.

Conclusion

My aim in this paper has been to point out the specificities of DP's characterisation of the middle class in India. The task was not just to reiterate his points, but also to bring out its underlying possibilities. The uniqueness of his ideas become evident when we place it vis-à-vis other academic works on the Indian middle-class. The relative paucity of relevant literature on this issue indicates DP's exceptional sense of history. Unlike his contemporaries, he realised the centrality of middle class in modern Indian society. André Béteille (2002: 7) notes that compared to what the Indian sociologists had published on caste, they had published very little on the middle class; yet they all belonged to that class. Satish Deshpande (2002: 128) offers an explanation for this: the middle class might have seemed an 'unworthy' or self-indulgent topic for a generation of social scientists drawn from this class, who believed that their mandate was to act on behalf of 'the people' who constituted the nation.

DP's idea of the middle class in 19th and 20th century India – its rootlessness, unproductive nature, sufferings under colonial hegemony, and incapacity to play a historical role to modernise society – has been reiterated by Partha Chatterjee:

> ... in the specific context of nineteenth-century Bengal, the middle class was not a fundamental class in this sense, nor were its intellectuals organic to any fundamental project of social transformation or conquest of hegemony. The new middle class was a product of English education. But in an economy under direct colonial control, in which there was little prospect for the release of forces of industrialisation, the attempt to achieve through education what was denied to the economy was utterly anomalous (1992: 24).

B.B. Mishra's 1961 classic study *India's Middle Classes: Their Growth in Modern Times* (1961) was a significant work on the middle class in post-independence days. But the middle class has changed much since then. Béteille has identified the changes in the structural composition of the middle class. At the time of independence the distinction between the middle class and the class of manual workers was clear. It was not just an economic distinction, but a social one, too. The technological changes, rise in the level of literacy, expansion of education, and white-collar trade-unionism (Chakrabarti 2005) have considerably lessened the gap. During the last fifty years, many new castes, belonging to the middle or even the lower levels of the traditional

hierarchy, have entered the middle class. Today, the Indian middle class is differentiated not only by caste, but also by income, education, and occupation (Béteille 2002: 6). Change from hierarchical inequality based on birth and patronage, to competitive inequality based on difference at the level of achievement in education, occupation, and income (*ibid.*: 24) makes the middle class a more socially variegated category.

In the post-liberalisation public discourse on middle class there is a consensus on the points that urban middle-class is the site of commodity consumption and that it is the recipient of the benefits of liberalisation (Fernandes 2000). The middle class has been found to be associated in structural terms with the expanded 'new economy' service sector and professional workforces in the private sector. It has largely been portrayed in this debate as a sizeable market, that is, affluent consumers with ability to exercise choice through consumption as well as being a victim to the excesses of consumerism (Verma 1998). Interestingly, the push towards economic liberalisation has been conducive to the growth of a certain section of the middle class, just as earlier on the promotion of development planning, the public sector and the socialistic pattern of society had been conducive to the growth of a somewhat different section of it (Béteille 2002: 18).

DP traced the origin of the process of differentiation among the middle class. The benefits of colonial policies had been accumulated at upper level of Indian middle class, dominated primarily by educated upper caste landed gentry. The lower middle class, by the early decades of 20th century, virtually had no other assets apart from their university degrees to survive in the colonial economy. The shrinking of the employment prospect of educated Indians in the government offices completely sealed their future. Frustrated young men embraced the socialist ideal to fight against the oppression and inequality.

DP's focus was not much on the structure of the middle class but on its function as an agent of modernisation. Hence, Deshpande's work, which provided us with a critical evaluation of the changing historical role played by the middle class in India could be taken as a reference point. Referring to Gramsci, Deshpande (2003: 143-44) argues that the main function of the middle class was to build hegemony. The elite fraction of middle class specialised in production of ideologies while its mass fraction was engaged in the exemplary consumption of ideologies, thus investing them with social legitimacy. For him, the Indian middle class during colonial times launched and managed the nationalist revival. In the post-independence period it continued the same nationalist project by managing the developmental process on behalf of the nation. Much like DP's understanding of the Five-Year Planning, Deshpande maintains

that development was perceived in the Nehruvian era as primarily a scientific-technical process over which middle-class professional experts would preside. It was a top-down version of development without any scope for any active role for the people. Centrality of the middle class in Indian development was also ensured by the fact that the state-led model of development gave primacy to the bureaucracy – an exclusive preserve of this class. This situation prevailed till the late 1960s. Decline of the ideology of development was, for Deshpande, related to the increasing differentiation within the middle class. For the most influential and powerful elite fraction of this class, the nation was no longer the canvas for their dreams and aspirations. The emergence of sub-national loyalties as well as the lure of the transnational identities made such changes possible. New ideologies of 'adjustment' and globalisation' replaced the ideology of national development. It was primarily the middle class, particularly its upper managerial-professional segment, who actually reaped the benefits of globalisation. The opportunism of middle class was revealed by the fact that having consolidated its social, economic, and political standing on the basis of the developmental state, this group was ready to kick it away as the ladder it no longer needed (*ibid.*: 150).

DP appreciated, though with qualification, the dynamism of middle class in its many attempts to reconstruct Indian society. Some contemporary works on middle class also tend to glorify its economic dynamism. Gurcharan Das's *India Unbound* celebrates 'the rise of a confident new middle class' (Das 2000: 280). Das insists that the new middle class was no 'greedier' than the old one, and the 'chief difference is that there is less hypocrisy and more self-confidence' (*ibid.*: 290). But some scholars criticise the moral deficiency of the middle class. Pavan Verma (1998: 89) condemns this class for its selfish materialism and the 'retreat from idealism' that was manifest in the smaller, 'traditional middle class' of the earlier, post-independent period. He writes at length on the declining social responsibility of the Indian middle class and its gradual abdication of a broader ethical and moral responsibility to the poor and to the nation as a whole. This class, he laments, now openly throws away the ideal of Gandhi, Nehru, and the freedom movement, which projected an image of refinement associated with a restraint on materialistic exhibitionism in a poor country (*ibid.*: 40).

A somewhat similar attitude was traced by DP in the beliefs and practices of the early generations of the new middle-class in India. It imbibed western capitalistic values from its colonial masters and started considering everything Indian or traditional as backward, and hence to be wiped out to move ahead in the path of progress. In this journey, it would allow the poor, illiterate Indian masses only on the condition of their

ability to get over their traditional temperament. This typical middle-class intellectual ego to set terms for others' development was apparent even in DP's effort to suggest ways of reconstructing Indian society and assigning the middle class a leadership role in it. But DP, unlike others, had the rare ability to make a self-critique. He firmly maintained that, if the middle-class intelligentsia truly intended to remake Indian society, it had to intellectually relate itself with the people whom it wants to change.

Béteille argues, 'Everything or nearly everything that is written about the Indian middle class is written by middle class Indians [who] tend to oscillate between self-recrimination and self-congratulations' (2003: 185). Deshpande and Verma are good examples of the former, while Das could be taken as representing the latter. DP, a firm believer of synthetic sociology, successfully integrated both the extremes in his theorisation. Unlike his contemporaries, he took up the challenge to criticise the middle class. For him, it was virtually a form of self-critique. But, interestingly, his was not an outright critique. Unlike Verma and Deshpande, whose criticisms of middle class revealed unilateral denunciation of this class, DP sympathised with them. His sense of history compelled him not to forget the constraints the middle class faced. He believed that middle class did whatever it could do. His criticality was not entirely a negative exercise. He was constantly looking for potentialities in the Indian middle class, which he conceived as the primary agent of social change in India. Viewed in this context, his sincere call for relating the middle class with the people at large was a unique proposition of his time.

Acknowledgement

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DISCUSSION

On M.N. Srinivas and Indian Sociology

The Challenge of Understanding Indian Society: Critique, Generosity and Transformations

Ananta Kumar Giri

> *Work for your contemporaries; but create what they need, not what they praise.*
>
> – Freirich Schiller

T.K Oommen's M.N. Srinivas Memorial Lecture (Oommen 2008) and responses of A.M. Shah (2008) and M.V. Nadkarni (2008) have raised a number of important issues which call for further exploration, cultivation, and probing. In this discussion note, I focus mainly on the following issues in Oommen's lecture: his reflections on methodological pluralism, his application of the label 'methodological Hinduism' to characterise the work of Srinivas, and the conflation of language and social reality in Srinivas's use of the word sanskritisation which Oommen misses in his critique.

On Fields, Methods, and Methodological Pluralism

Oommen talks about the disjunction between field and method and the need for methodological pluralism. He argues that one particular method, for example, participant observation, is not suitable to all situations of fields; instead of method monism, we need to practise methodological pluralism. Oommen attributes methodological monism to parts of Srinivas's works, but he himself presents Srinivas's argument for the

need for 'methodological catholicity and resilience, and an ability to choose the appropriate method for tackling a particular problem' (Oommen 2008: 68). Cultivating methodological plurality is an indispensable challenge before us, but this urges us to have a multi-dimensional and plural realisation of method itself. It seems, by method Oommen mainly refers to techniques of data collection. This is part of the modernistic view of looking at method only as a tool, as an aspect of epistemology. But method is not only a tool of understanding outside reality, objective world, it is also part of the constitution of self, an aspect of ontology. Method is part of what I have elsewhere called 'ontological epistemology of participation' (Giri 2006) involving both epistemology and ontology in interpenetrative and transformative ways.

With a broadened and deepened realisation of method, involving both epistemology and ontology and more than just techniques of data collection, we can overcome some of the difficulties that Oommen finds in the method of participant observation. Oommen writes, 'If one is studying one's society defined in the narrowest possible terms (for example, Sri Vaishnava Brahmins, in the case of Srinivas), is not participant observation a contradiction in terms because the observer and the participant are rolled into one?' (*ibid.*: 62). But is it not the fact that in all situations of participatory learning (I am deliberately not using the term 'participant observation' because of the limitation of the primacy of the observing) one is simultaneously an observer and a participant? In fact, modern science has long ago questioned absolute separation between the observer and the observed. Not only in the study of one's own community but even in the study of distant other is it possible to separate the participant dimension from the observing dimension? Oommen finds this contradictory, possibly because he is still working within a dualism between participation and observation.

It is probably because of this binding that Oommen finds Srinivas's call for making oneself an object of anthropological study problematic. Oommen writes,

> Including the study of self and not only the other within the ken of social anthropology has a logical consequence, namely, the study of individual self, not just the societal self, can also become the unit of research! And Srinivas did reach this logical destination when he proposed the following 'field' for anthropological investigations. He asks: 'Why can't an anthropologist treat his life as an ethnographic field and study it? [...] The life of every individual can be regarded as a 'case study' and who is better qualified than the individual himself to study it (*ibid.*: 62).

Oommen reads the implication of this in this way: 'If these proposals are accepted, not only the "field" of social anthropology expands exponentially but its methods too have to multiply because it has to study the distant other, the immediate other, one's own society and even the individual self' (*ibid.*: 62-63). But he associates social anthropology with one method only, namely, participant observation. Anthropology itself has a plurality of methods including life-history. Some classic works in anthropology such as Sidney Mintz's *Worker in the Cane: A Puerto Rican Life History* (1960) has involved life-study method where case study of a single individual tells us a lot about society in which one lives and histories within histories that flow through individuals and societies. In his *The Body Silent*, anthropologist Robert Murphy (1987) has gifted us an excellent autobiography-cum-ethnography of his predicament as not being able to move. Thus, in putting forward self as a field of investigation which is not meant to be confined only to the discipline of anthropology and which ought to overflow also into fields like sociology, Srinivas is indeed articulating many creative streams in social sciences and at the same time challenging us to go beyond the subject-object dualism. Why should we study only objects and others, why our own life and self not be a subject of study?

Thus, reflections on methods and the call for methodological pluralism invite us to take part in fundamental methodological transformations in this field where there is a move towards going beyond dualism of participation and observation and realisation non-duality as a journey. Tim Ingold probably has this in mind when he writes:

> Yet all science depends on observation, and all observation depends upon participation—that is, on a close coupling, in perception and action, between the observer and those aspects of the world that are the focus of attention. If science is to be a coherent knowledge practice, it must be built on the foundation of openness rather than closure, engagement rather than detachment. And this means regaining the sense of astonishment that is so conspicuous by its absence from contemporary scientific work. Knowing must be connected with being, epistemology with ontology, thought with life (2006: 19).

Understanding the relationship between field and method also invites us to explore if we can look at method itself as a field. For example, participant observation as a method can itself be looked and realised as a field. Such a field-view of method would help us to embody pluralities in each of the methods that Oommen talks about, for example, the qualitative and the quantitative. For development ethicist Des Gasper, what is often labelled as case-approach includes a varieties of cases or different kinds of cases, for example, 'thick case studies; thin case

studies; real life choice situations; real life anecdotes and other illustrations; conceivably true fictions; and impossible fictions' (2003: 196). Thus, Oommen's call for methodological pluralism invites us to pluralise each of the methods which are conceived in a unitary and monolithic way.

One important challenge of methodological pluralism is to combine description of the field and the voices of actors who constitute such a field. The voice of individual actors and communities is missing from Srinivas's account of sanskritisation which is presented mainly in macro terms.[1]

For Oommen, social anthropology began as a study of the non-western society, while sociology, a study of the West. But both sociology and social anthropology involve study of both western and non-Western societies, self and other. This is not only true of the present but also of what happened in the past, as Shah also makes this point in his response. Elsewhere Oommen writes, 'Participant observation was an appropriate method to study the other, but to study one's own society one can resort to a plurality of methods' (Oommen 2008: 70). But participant observation is helpful not only in the study of the other but also in the study of the self. At the same time, there is a foundational limitation of participant observation that we need to explore. Participant observation gives primacy to observation in the practice of participation and this is limiting. It subjects the object of study to the gaze of observation. Participation involves many processes of interaction and communications – verbal, non-verbal, and visual. In order to realise methodological pluralism as an ongoing process of pluralisation, we need to pluralise the monolithic conceptions of available elements of methods, such as quantitative and qualitative, and strive to overcome the dualism between participation and observation.

On Methodological Hinduism

Oommen writes,

> Social scientists differ in their methodological orientations. For example, Durkheim gave primacy to society and hence his methodological orientation may be designated as societal determinism. Similarly, Marx's methodology is often labelled as economic determinism. In contrast Weber's obsession with individual action prompted analysts to designate him as a methodological individualist. The tendency to conflate state and nation and treating nation-state as a self-contained unit of analysis is referred to as 'methodological nationalism [...] Following the same trail, the methodology pursued by Srinivas to understand Indian society may be designated as methodological Sanskritic Hinduism. This qualifier to Hinduism is crucial because

he did not take into account Dravidian Hinduism [...] But for purposes of brevity and elegance I will refer to this orientation as Methodological Hinduism' (*ibid.:* 76).

'Methodological Hinduism' is the label Oommen uses to describe the methodology used by Srinivas to understand Indian society. In his first major work, *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India,* Srinivas (2003b/1952) used the methodology of participant observation from social anthropology and sociology to understand Indian society. It is mainly through study of Hindu religion and society, by applying the methods of participant observation, that Srinivas not only made Hinduism an object of study but also Indian society. As André Béteille argues:

> Srinivas's representation of Hinduism in *Religion and Society* is that of the social anthropologist and not of the philosopher or the moralist. [...] his task was to present an account of its actual beliefs and practices as seen from the vantage point of a particular Hindu community. [...] As a social anthropologist, he valued observation and description above introspection and speculation. He knew that introspection had been valued far above observation in the Indian intellectual tradition, and in his early and most productive years as a sociologist, he felt that he had to swim against the current. Those productive years began with the writing of *Religion and Society among the Coorgs* (2003: xxiii-xxiv).

Thus, according to Oommen, for Srinivas, Hinduism became an object of study and it became methodological as opposed to merely textual or self-valorising.

In modernity, method has been looked at as an epistemological process; it has been looked at only as a tool. But method is not only a tool for understanding social reality; it also plays a role in the constitution of self and society (Ankersmit 2002; Giri 2004). This is the ontological dimension of method. In modernity, only the epistemological dimension of method was emphasised. But, once we look at method as having both an epistemological dimension as well as an ontological dimension, it opens up new vistas, horizons, realities, and possibilities. Take, for example, the term methodological individualism: it treats individuals as a unit of study. But methodological individualism is also an individualism that emerges out of methodological meditations and engagements which is different from egoistic individualism. For example, methodological individualism as an ontology has the potential to make individualism more self-reflexive and different from either possessive individualism or egoistic individualism. Similarly, once we realise that method also constitutes self and society, constitutes our

reality, then methodological Hinduism is a Hinduism which is methodological, as different from what is just uttered by people or written in the texts. Methodological Hinduism, thus, has a potential to make it much more self-critical and open-ended. Similarly, methodological religion and theology is much more self-critical and open-ended (see Béteille 2009; Wilfred 2004).[2] Thus, one implication of applying the label of methodological Hinduism to Srinivas's construction of Hinduism is that he understood Hinduism through the methodology of participant observation which presented a different portrait of Hinduism than what appears in the texts or in the valorised speeches and articulations of its practitioners. Hinduism that emerges from such engagement is methodological; it is not just what is written in the texts and what is spoken by the people.

Methodology has another implication: an act of valorisation. It sometimes valorises individualism as methodological nationalism valorises nationalism. Applying the label of methodological Hinduism raises the question: Did Srinivas valorise Hinduism? Here, Srinivas's approach is much more complex and multi-dimensional. In some of his passages we can find an element of valorisation of Hinduism, but in others it is an engagement of non-valorisation and critique.[3] Srinivas has not only used the language of cohesion, he has also used the language of revolution. In his 1986 essay 'On Living in a Revolution' Srinivas writes,

> A most depressing scenario for the future is that concerning the relations between dominant, landowning castes and the scheduled castes. The conflict between the two is likely to become more and more bitter, and violent. It will be a primary arena for the struggle for equality in India (2009: 381).

If Srinivas wrote in 1956[4] that if caste dies then so does Hinduism, his last major essay which was posthumously published is titled: 'An Obituary on Caste as a System' (2003a). In this essay, while writing an obituary on caste as a system facilitated by transformations in production relations, Srinivas does not write any obituary about Hinduism, nor does he show any anxiety about this.

Oommen writes that Srinivas used methodological Hinduism to understand Indian society. India is a plural society but Srinivas did not study any other religion expect Hinduism. Even Srinivas's 1987–88 essay, 'Social Significance of Religion in India,' does not discuss much the dynamics of non-Hindu religions in India. Oommen applies the label 'methodological Hinduism' to Srinivas to suggest that Srinivas used Hinduism in an exclusive way to understand Indian society. Such an

exclusionary emphasis is noticeable in Srinivas's *Marriage and Family in Mysore* (1942). As Simon Charsley argues about this study:

> The framework of 'discrete, classifiable castes already promoted by the succeeding Censuses of India [...] provided the frame for the project which Srinivas was given by his teacher Ghurye. [...] This framework already served to focus discussion and make important sections of the Mysore population peripheral to the argument. In fact, religious orientation – being Hindu – is introduced as the initial qualification for relevance. The chief result was to rule out and make invisible major sections of the population which did not relate positively to the Brahmans. These were first the Muslims, making up 6 per cent of the total in 1931 but more important than this proportion implies. [...] To his exclusion of Muslims, Srinivas adds 'Christians, Jains and even Lingayats', though 'the last mentioned are no doubt Hindus' (1998: 533).[5]

But the use of the label 'methodological Hinduism' also urges us to probe the methods of Hinduism. Different ways of logic, argumentations, and philosophical systems within Hinduism have a rich repertoire of methodology. This is a vast topic, but let us explore some of the methodological reflections and practices in these ways of argumentations and philosophical systems. And then we can probe whether Srinivas built upon these methodological insights to deepen the vision and method of participant observation or he just applied the method of participant observation and the theory of social structure from British social anthropology to study Indian society. The methods of argumentation and conversation in the Upanishads[6] have a potential for participatory discussion and learning which are also aimed at in the methods of participant observation in sociology and anthropology. As Godavarish Mishra argues,

> The most important method is the method of inquiry where certain simple but critical questions are raised and answered. [...] In the Upanishads we repeatedly find that the questions are asked in different ways and answers are given till the students are [...] satisfied. [...] The underlying intention is to provide clarity of the concepts and create a corresponding experiential base in the interlocutor. [...] This method of questioning is adopted in many systems of Indian philosophy to ensure that no view was accepted without being examined for its experiential validity (2004: 278-79).

Sruti (listening) is an important method in ways of thinking in Vedas, but it is also accompanied by *pramana*s, evidence which give us 'objective knowledge' (*ibid.* 275). The *pramana*s make methods empirical, thus enabling building bridges with methods in social sciences such as participant observation and survey research. 'Sankara does not

dogmatically follow *Sruti*. He says that there should be experiential domain for *Sruti*, as 'even a hundred scriptural texts declaring fire to be cold or non-luminous, will not be authoritative' (*ibid.*: 287). Around this method of *pramanas* the Mimanshakas developed hermeneutical methods 'for the understanding and the interpretation of the Vedas', while at the same time acknowledging the limitations of hermeneutical method and the need for it to be open to revelation (*ibid.*: 279-80).

> In order to resolve the seeming contradictions of the text, Mimamsaka proposes that the subject matter (*visaya*) has to be identified first. This has to be followed by statement of possible doubts (*samsaya*). Then comes the prima facie view (*purvapaksha*) which postulates a set of meanings [...] based on which the doubt is answered. This is followed by the suggested view (*uttara-paksha*), which refutes the meaning proffered by the prima facie view, through rational arguments and offers an alternative set of meanings. Then comes *nirnaya*, the definitive judgment on the meaning of the text. The chief aim of this hermeneutic method is to identify the proper context in which the Vedic passages could be related to human needs in a more meaningful way and to show its all time applicability beyond the temporal justification (*ibid.*: 280).

Advaita Vedanta has a method called *adhyaropa-apapada* (super-imposition and de-superimposition). While *adhyaropa* points to the fact that many of our concepts and languages are superimposition upon reality, *apapada* reiterates the need for de-superimposition. Languages and concepts we use are many a time a superimposition upon reality which need to be accompanied by a process of de-superimposition. Language does not only help us communicate, it also creates illusion and distortion of reality. In this context, it is worth asking whether the language and concept of sanskritisation is a superimposition upon reality. As we shall shortly see, the word sanskritisation conflates language and society which is a superimposition upon reality which not only constructs reality in a particular way but also distorts it. In this context, Shankara emphasises de-superimposition as an inevitable part of understanding reality. As Ramakrishna Puligandla helps us understand: 'advancing an argument and rescinding it at the end; one advances an argument in order to inspire and orient the listener; and one finally rescinds the argument' in order to enable one understand reality in an open-ended way (quoted in Giri 2004: 354).

Thus, methodological practices from these broadly conceived Hindu modes of thinking have important implications for methods in social sciences. Methods like de-superimposition help us overcome illusions and not to be bound to the prisons that we ourselves create through the use of language and concepts. 'It is part of movement from *adhyasa* –

illusion (which is a very important concept in the Indic epistemology) to ever greater approximation to truth' (Wilfred 2004: 167). It also urges for purification of methods and consciousness in its stages of sense-perception, rational and theoretical understanding, and at the stage of wisdom. Methodology in these systems of thinking is not only confined to sense perception and rationalisation, but also includes movement towards the 'third stage of *prajna* or wisdom' (*ibid.*: 168).

Thus, if we talk of 'methodological Hinduism', then methodological implication of working with some of these ways of thinking and being is (a) to realise the limits of both sense perception and rationalisation and (b) to impregnate these practices with perspective and practice of wisdom. Here a facile distinction between Indic speculation and modern day social science methods of either empiricism or rationalism does not help us realise that not only speculation creates illusions, empirical work, concept formation as well as theoretical construction, application and analysis can and do create illusions. There is a need to purify our sense perception and rational mode of thinking and embody an art of *prajna* or wisdom. As Felix Wilfred helps us understand this:

> At this level there takes place a purification of the rationalizing process. For the latter process could be seriously conditioned by interests, passions and desire. [...] Wisdom is a stage in which intellect and will, reason and passion, desire and restraint are reconciled and not polarised. The stage of *prajna* is able to do that precisely because it is a stage of wholeness in which various layers and dimensions of the real are held together (*ibid.*: 169).

In his methodology did Srinivas build upon such methodological insights from broadly conceived Hindu intellectual traditions? In his un-ease with the Indological approach and cultivation of an anthropological approach, Srinivas did not build upon such methodological insights from Hindu traditions. Srinivas did not carry out a dialogue between methods of social sciences and such insights from Hindu traditions. Such a dialogue is, by and large, absent in Indian social sciences including in most of the followers of Srinivas and his critics.[7] Oommen, for example, has not carried out such a dialogue. He is critical of the project of indigenisation which for him promotes 'pathological nationalism' (2007a: 12). But the dialogical project presented here is different from the project of indigenisation. The task here is one of learning, going deeper and across, and being engaged with dialogues across traditions of thinking – modern social sciences and traditions of argumentations in India. This is a major poverty of Indian sociology and the need for such a dialogue can be easily swept under the carpet by constructing the

challenge of understanding Indian society in terms of a facile dualism between book-view and field-view.[8] Oommen (*ibid.*) himself urges us to go beyond the dualism of universalisation and indigenisation and to focus on contextualisation (see Welz 2009). But contextualisation too calls for dialogues. Undertaking dialogues across boundaries, for example, between modern social sciences and traditions of thinking such as Shankara's *adhyaropa-apavada* is also an important challenge here. Contextualisation also calls for going beyond surface view of context.

Sanskritisation: The Conflation of Language, Religion, and Dynamics of Self and Social Transformations

The foundational problem with the word sanskritisation, which is offered as a concept, is that it uses the category of a language to connote religion and dynamics of self and social transformations. Srinivas uses this word keeping in mind Sanskrit as a language but such an innocent phrase hides many deeper processes such as Brahminisation or difficulty of expressing the dynamics of change that Srinivas wants to present through the category of Brahminisation. As Shah writes,

> A question is often asked, particularly in discussions of the concept in regional languages: is this word based on *Sanskrit* (name of the language) or *sanskriti* (meaning culture, civilisation)? Both Srinivas and Chatterjee [Chatterjee who had independently used this word to describe cultural change in Indian history] based it on the former rather than the latter. For both of them, the concept was inextricably linked to the religious and cultural complex found in classical Sanskrit literature (2005: 239).

The word for culture in Sanskrit as well as in several Indian languages is *sanskriti*. Sanskrit comes as shorthand for the description of the work in the field of culture, *sanskriti*, a process which is also primarily looked at in cultural terms rather than structural terms. As Srinivas clarifies, he looks at sanskritisation primarily in cultural terms rather than in structural terms.[9] The use of the linguistic category of Sanskrit to describe the dynamics of change in the field of *sanskriti* (culture) contributes to the conflation of language and social reality. This has been a foundational problem with Srinivas right from the days of his MA thesis on 'Marriage and Family in Mysore', as Charsely helps us understand this: 'This term 'Sanskritic', of such significance for the future, slips into discussion without introduction or definition' (1998: 531). It is probably for this reason that Sanskritists objected to use of the word sanskritisation. As Srinivas writes, 'The Sanskritists condemned my use of the word sanskritisation. [...] The term has been uniformly condemned by Sanskritists everywhere, but in spite – or because – of

that, sanskritisation has been used extensively by those writing on social and cultural change in South Asia' (2009: 680-81). It seems, Srinivas did not pay any heed to the objection of Sanskritists, possibly because, as a non-living language lacking in political power, Sanskrit had its own limitation in modern India to force Srinivas to realise that he was using the category of language to bail him out of his conceptual and methodological difficulty of describing and representing social and cultural change in India. As Srinivas writes,

> *sanskritisation is no doubt an awkward term, but it was preferred to Brahminisation for several reasons: Brahminisation is subsumed in the wider process of sanskritisation though at some points Brahminisation and sanskritisation are at variance with each other.* For instance, the Brahmins of the Vedic period drank *soma*, an alcoholic drink, ate beef, and offered blood sacrifices. Both were given up in the post-Vedic times. It has been suggested that this was the result of Jain and Buddhist influence. Today, Brahmins are, by and large, vegetarians: only the Saraswat, Kashmiri, and Bengali Brahmins eat non-vegetarian food. All these Brahmins are, however, traditionally teetotallers. *Had the term Brahminisation been used, it would have been necessary to specify which particular Brahmin group was meant, and at which period of its recorded history (ibid.:* 201; emphases added).

Insofar as the word sanskritisation is concerned, Shah reiterates: 'In any case, however, in scientific discourse the substantive content of a term is far more important than its etymology' (2005: 239). But, what is the substantive content of the term? As Srinivas writes in one of his early formulations of sanskritisation in the chapter on social structure in his Coorg book:

> Every caste tended to imitate the customs and ritual of topmost caste, and this was responsible for the spread of sanskritisation. When this process is viewed in a continental scale and over a period of at least 2, 500 years, it is easy to see how Sanskritic ideas and beliefs penetrated the remotest hill tribes in such a manner as not to do violence to their traditional beliefs (1952: 30).

But the key question is why call it sanskritisation? Etymology, as Shah seems to suggest, is not innocent here. It is deliberately used to conflate language with religion and dynamics of self and social change and, as Srinivas acknowledged, in such construction 'facts have been oversimplified in order to make some general statements' *(ibid.:* 27-28). Such oversimplification facilitated by the conflation of language, religion and social dynamics constitutes the foundational problem of the

discourse of Sanskrtisation which is rarely realised by its supporters or problematised by its critics.

Let us hear what Srinivas has to say about different aspects of sanskritisation. Srinivas offered sanskritisation to present a dynamic view of caste mobility. In the same Coorg book, he writes:

> It is not always the Brahmin priest who is the agent of Sanskritic Hinduism. In every part of the Kannada country, and in Coorg, the Lingayat sect, consisting exclusively of non-Brahmins, have exercised in the past a Sanskritizing influence. Lingayat ritual is Sanskritic (though not Vedic), and the Lingayat Rajas of Coorg have been responsible for the sanskritisation of the customs, manners, and rites of Coorgs. Customs like marking the forehead every morning with three stripes of sacred ashes (*vibhuti*), celebrating the festival of Sivaratri, and erecting tombstones, surmounted by the figure of the Nandi Bull, over the graves of important persons reveal Lingayat influence (*ibid.*: 226).

Srinivas further writes,

> The Brahmin too has been influenced by non-Sanskritic modes of worship, and impressed with the power of village deities and, very rarely, through a non-Brahminical friend, of an animal to the village deities like Mari during an epidemic of small pox or plague or cholera (*ibid.*: 226-27).

In his 1956 essay, 'A Note on Sanskritisation and Westernisation', Srinivas writes: 'However thoroughgoing the sanskritisation of an Untouchable group may be, it is unable to cross the barrier of untouchability' (2009: 215). For Srinivas,

> It is necessary to undermine the fact that sanskritisation is an extremely complex and heterogeneous concept. It is even possible that it would be more preferable to treat it as a bundle of concepts than as a single concept. *The important thing to remember is that it is only a name for widespread social and cultural process, and our main task is to understand the nature of these processes. The moment it is discovered that the term is more a hindrance than a help in analysis, it should be discarded quickly and without regret* (*ibid.*: 218; emphases added).

Srinivas himself outlined the need for more research which is yet an unmet challenge in Indian sociology after more that fifty years:

> One way of breaking down sanskritisation into simpler and more homo-geneous concepts would be to write a history of Sanskritic culture taking care to point the value systems subsumed in it and to delineate the regional variations. The task would be a stupendous one even if the period beginning with British rule were excluded. Such a study is not likely to be forthcoming in the near future and anthropologists would be well advised

to continue studying sanskritisation as they are doing at present: study each field instance of sanskritisation in relation to the locally dominant caste and other factors. The next task would be to compare different instances of sanskritisation in the same culture-area, and the third task would be to extend the scope of comparative studies to include the whole of India. Such an approach might also enable us to translate historical problems into social problems (2009: 219; also see Shah 2005).

Sanskritic Hinduism is fundamental to the concept of sanskritisation.[10] Srinivas uses the term Sanskritic Hinduism, as do his supporters such as Shah and critics such as Oommen. But what does Sanskritic Hinduism mean? Is it Hinduism where its practitioners – priests, for example – speak Sanskrit as a language, or some of its important sacred books are written in Sanskrit? If sanskritisation conflates language, social reality, and social dynamics to overcome the difficult social and ritual issue of the role of Brahmins in Hindu social structure and dynamics, then the term Sanskritic Hinduism continues the same conflation of language, social reality, and religion. Let us read what Srinivas writes about Sanskritic Hinduism: 'Sanskritic Hinduism is Hinduism which transcends provincial barriers and is common to the whole of India' (1952: 74). But why it should be called Sanskritic Hinduism? According to Srinivas 'The sacred literature of the Hindus in Sanskrit (or inspired by Sanskrit but in regional or other languages) has played a vital part in enabling Sanskritic Hinduism to absorb local cults' (2009: 223). But the sacred literature in the original text and translations do not just propagate one monolithic version of Hinduism. Moreover, when translated in mother languages of India, these texts have also interrogated existing hierarchy, as, for example, one finds in Sarala Das's translation of Mahabharata into Oriya in the 15th century. Srinivas writes:

> Paradoxical as it may seem, the use of the ordinary languages of the people for religious purposes, the advocacy of a single-minded love of God as the simplest means of achieving salvation, and the general anti-elitism of Bhakti cults, greatly enhanced the spread of the ideas associated with Sanskritic or higher Hinduism' (*ibid.*: 365).

But Bhakti movements are complex formations of contestations in language, religion and society. For examples, Bhakti poets in medieval Orissa have interrogated both the dominance of Sanskrit language and caste hierarchy. The literature of Bhakti movement simply did not reproduce the so-called values of higher Hinduism. In this context, what M.V. Nadkarni writes in his rejoinder to Oommen deserves our careful consideration:

> But there is also a vast body of non-Sanskritic literature, composed by *bhakti sant*s, which is considered equally sacred by its followers as the *shruti*, which is strongly opposed to the caste system. This dates from about 6th century AD itself from Tamil Nadu, spreading all over India (2008: 404).

Srinivas has also written about the significance of Bhakti movement in cultivating non-Sanskritic language, but it seems this has not affected his model of sanskritisation.[11]

In his 1956 essay on sanskritisation, Srinivas wrote, 'The spread of Sanskrit theological ideas increased under British rule' (2009: 206).[12] Furthermore, 'The discovery of Sanskrit by Western scholars, and the systematic piercing of India's past by Western or Western-inspired scholarship, gave Indians a much needed confidence in their relationship with the West' (*ibid.*: 207) Sanskritic Hinduism as a discourse as well as practice is produced by the process of westernisation and is inconceivable without Orientalism. We have to take into account the wider historical and discursive field in which Hinduism as Sanskritic is produced in which Orientalism played a significant role. Colonial government with the aid of Orientalists formalised Hindu customs and gave primacy to what is written in the Sanskrit language texts. Such codification had profound implication for what constitutes authentic Hinduism and the constitution of a new legal order. It also gave primacy to Sanskrit language, which was not there in the life of the people, thus undoing the creative work of Bhakti movements in questioning the primacy of Sanskrit language[13] as well as Brahminical hegemony.

But the discourse of Sanskritic Hinduism was limiting as it did not embody pluralities within Hinduism. The concept of Sanskritic Hinduism used uncritically by Srinivas and his followers such as Shah and critics such as Oommen does not adequately reflect plural streams of living, contestation, and creativity in Hinduism not only in the present but also in the past.

Pluralism is an important challenge in understanding not only Indian society but also Hinduism, and Srinivas's stance on it is quite complex. In his vast *oeuvre* there are some passages which are more plural than others. But one issue needs to be noted. Even in his 1987–88 essay on 'The Social Significance of Religion in India', there is not much discussion of the work of non-Hindu religions and their social significance. Srinivas also did not work on non-Hindu religions to understand their dynamics in India society and their significance for understanding Indian society.

In his critique of sanskritisation, Oommen does not address the foundational problem of conflating language, religion, and society in it, rather he himself continues this conflation by offering phrases such as Tamilisation.[14] Like sanskritisation, such terms are supposed to be concepts and have a self-generating conceptual effect holding us in awe and amazement. Oommen also does not interrogate the construction of Sanskritic Hinduism itself as monolithic, produced under the joint regime of Orientalism and colonialism. Instead, in an exercise of critique, which at this foundational level does not go beyond an act of mirroring and reproducing the very terms of discourse, Oommen proposes Dravidian Hinduism as an alternative to Sanskritic Hinduism.[15] But both of these are complex mirrors of each other. As M.S.S. Pandian helps us understand this in his significant work, *Brahmin and Non-Brahmin: Genealogies of the Tamil Political Present* (2007), it is Orientalism which produced Hinduism as Brahminical, and the non-Brahmin movements in Tamil Nadu, instead of interrogating this construction, accepted such a construction of Hinduism uncritically. Hinduism of Non-Brahmin movement became a mirror opposite of the Sanskritic Hinduism constructed by the Orientalists. For Pandian, Orientalist notions of Hinduism 'celebrated Sanskrit texts and Brahmins as true bearers of Hindu authenticity' (*ibid.*: 51).

> The anti-Brahminism of Iyothee Thoss and Maraimalai Adigal was no different, for the metaphysics of caste as an enforced hierarchy remained in their discourses, largely in tact. [...] Negating Brahminism, they respectively valorised Buddhist Parayar and Saivite Vellalar. Regrettably, this substitution only recast their ideal in more or less in the image of the Brahmin (*ibid.*: 143, 142).

For Pandian,

> the Brahmin as a trope' continued unquestioned in the much valorised self-respect movement of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy: 'Ramasamy's idea of an essentialised Hinduism was premised on Brahmin self-representation based on Orientalist knowledge. [...] the Orientalist conception of Hinduism became the basis of advancing a new critique of Brahmin power (*ibid.*: 204, 187).[16]

It was not only Brahminical Hinduism that was exclusionary, the Hinduism of the non-Brahmin movement, including what Oommen seems to be celebrating as Dravidian Hinduism opposing Sanskritic Hinduism, that was and continues to be exclusionary. It excluded the lower castes and the dalits. Such exclusion continues in the present strengthened by the reign of Dravidian politics in the last eight decades

which has created a politics and language of closure on the path of self-realisation and emancipation of dalits.

In his mirroring critique of Srinivas, as different from a foundational one, Oommen writes: 'Srinivas did not pay attention to the challenge of Tamilisation. This is the reason behind designating his orientation as methodological Hinduism ...' (2008: 77). Here Oommen invokes the notion of Tamilakkam presented by Burton Stein: 'Tamilakkam connotes the home of Tamil language, culture and / or people and symbolises the distinction between Tamils who are internal to Tamil Nadu and contrasts them with the "external other", the Aryan Hindus, who follow Sanskritic Hinduism' (*ibid.*: 74). But those who spoke Tamil in the past practised different religions such as Hinduism, animism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, and Christianity. Oommen constructs the oppositional categories of Dravidian Hinduism and Sanskritic Hinduism, but Tamilakkam was and is not a space for Dravidian Hinduism only. It was and is a space of pluralities, including plural religions; homogenous construction of Tamilakkam makes many people who live inside it feel alienated. Roy Gowthamam, a contemporary dalit cultural critic from Tamil Nadu, writes: 'Tamil culture, though being talked of as if a homogeneous one, contains several contradictory elements' (quoted in Pandian 2007: 341). Giving expression to the pain of the marginalised such as dalits, in what Oommen celebrates as Tamilakkam, Gowthamam writes: 'All are hunters. We can call our Tamil culture as the culture of the hunters' (quoted in *ibid.*: 241).[17]

In order to appreciate the significance of Oommen's critique of sanskritisation via 'Tamilisation', let us read Srinivas on this:

> In the Tamil country, however, there has been an attempt to reject the older epic Ramayana on the ground that it is Northern, Aryan, and anti-Dravidian. The organised hatred for the Ramayana is part of the Tamil non-Brahmin movement, a cultural and political movement which began towards the end of World War I (2009: 226).

In his essay, 'A Brief Note on the Ayappa: The South Indian Deity', Srinivas writes:

> A student of South Indian ethnography cannot help becoming deeply interested in Ayyappa. To call him South Indian is not to deny him all-India and Sanskritic affiliations, but only to stress the fact that the form he assumes in South India is different from the form he assumes in the North. Quite frequently, a deity's character changes from one region of South India to another. The Sanskritic and popular names are often different, and occasionally, there is no relation between the deity as he is represented in Sanskrit literature and the deity and his devotees in any small local area

conceive him to be. These differences are important to the ethnographer, and a fieldworker has to be specially careful to see that he does not allow the Sanskrit name of a deity into attributing to him all the characteristics which are found in *Vedas* and *Puranas* , and other works (*ibid.*: 347).

This shows that Srinivas was aware of differential work of Hinduism in different parts of India, especially in South India, and in the Tamil country.

Oommen refers to Islamisation in talking about sanskritisation. There is a need to explore the link between Islamisation and sanskritisation. Hindus, especially low-caste, down the centuries have found a way of escaping caste hierarchy by embracing or converting to other religions such as Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism. Thus, understanding the dynamics of change in Indian society requires looking at sanskritisation and these forces of conversion together.

Labour and Love of Mutual Understanding: Critique, Generosity and the Challenge of Learning

In their response to Oommen, Shah (2008) and Nadkarni (2008) have raised many important issues. Nadkarni urges us to go back to the texts and argues that the hierarchy of caste is not legitimised in Purusasukta. Nadkarni also refers to *guna* and *karma* in Gita as important markers of caste but these have not been able to transform the caste system. The only thing that has given a jolt to caste system is the transformation of *jati*-based division of labour and caste-based production system. As Srinivas writes,

> the localised system of food grain and other necessities [...] based on a caste-wise division of labour is fast breaking down all over rural India, and is likely to disappear in near future. This event is of momentous importance for it augurs the end of a social order which has continued for 2,000 years or more' (2003a: 455).

Srinivas goes on to argue that just an ideological attack on caste system as it happened in Buddhism, Jainism, and Bhakti movement which is 'not backed up or underpinned by a mode of social production ignoring or violating caste-based division of labour [...] is totally inadequate' (*ibid.*: 459).

In his rejoinder, Shah has made important contributions about the method of anthropology and history of the discipline in India and Britain. But his critique of Oommen is not accompanied by generosity, just as Oommen's application of the label 'methodological Hinduism' to Srinivas without elaboration of its many implications lacks in generosity.

Shah writes, 'Oommen should read all of Srinivas's writings, and in full, rather than pick on a couple of convenient sentences as he has done repeatedly' (2008: 397-98). How does Shah know and can be so sure that Oommen has not read Srinivas in full. Shah accuses Oommen of 'violation of norms of academic discourse'. What is the norm that Shah follows in making such an accusation? What example is Shah setting? Shah writes towards the end of his rejoinder: 'Srinivas wrote a great deal on secularism, pluralism, and other values enshrined in the constitution of India, but Oommen has not read them, and if he has, he has either not understood them or ignored them deliberately' (*ibid.*: 399). Critique needs to be accompanied by generosity, which is not simply a matter of charity or academic courtesy; it is a fundamental aspect of integrity and responsibility. Undoubtedly, Srinivas has written a great 'deal on secularism, pluralism, and other values enshrined in the constitution of India', but so has Oommen (2002). Oommen has not only written about these issues extensively in his creative *oeuvre* of the last forty years, but he also embodies an inspiring passion for nurturing plural spaces for conversations, realisations, and transformations in India and the world. Has Shah read or felt the obligation to read any of Oommen's writings, including the one most relevant to his discussion, *Knowledge and Society* (Oommen 2007a)?

The anger and accusation manifest in Shah's critique of Oommen is not merely personal; it is a reflection of the nature of Indian sociology as a discursive and interactive field. In Indian sociology very rarely has there been a dialogue among its practitioners.[18] There is studied and deliberate ignorance of each other's work in Indian sociology. We practitioners very rarely feel that we all belong to an intertwined field of strivings in which we have a moral responsibility and professional obligation to read each other's work. Very rarely do we read each other's works: a study of referencing patterns could be a creative project of sociology of knowledge of Indian sociology. We embody not only profound mutual disrespect, but also disrespectful indifference. Most of the time, in our normal interactions, we do not even care to respond. Apathy, to be sure, is more dangerous than unfair criticism. Given the lack of normal critical dialogue among fellow practitioners, the only way it can be expressed is through angry outbursts. Mutual understanding is a matter of love and labour. It does not sweep under the carpet envy, hatred, jealousy, apathy, and unfair criticism; it seeks to transform such conditions.

The challenge of understanding Indian society needs to be met by transforming such conditions of apathy and creating conditions of mutual learning, dialogue, and respect. Here, interrogating some of our foun-

dational assumptions such as the conflation of language and social reality as it happens in the term sanskritisation is important. There is also a need for dialogue between methods of modern social sciences and traditions of argumentations in India. Indian sociology, as a field, needs to nurture generous critique as a mode of being, inter-subjectivity, and mutual engagement, where critique is accompanied by generosity, which is a matter of not only charity but also integrity and responsibility.

Critique and generosity also can be accompanied by work of humour. Satish Deshpande (2003) tells us that sociologists as a tribe have very few jokes in their field. But probably in Indian sociology we have some jokes about each other which are spoken in the backyard rather than in the front yard. Such jokes, if spoken to each other in front, can help us have a sense of humour and contribute to fostering mutual reading, learning, and conversation in the pool of sociology, which, bereft of such interactions, unfortunately faces the danger of stagnation.

Jokes could be disrespectful and we need to have a sense of respectful humour. Here, Srinivas, with his inspiring ease and humility, can be our teacher and fellow-traveller. I was once conversing with an anthropologist from abroad and he told me of the following quip by Srinivas in a conversation with fellow scholars: 'He [referring to a student of Srinivas] complains that I am not a theorist, but I do not complain that he is not a Buddhist.'

Notes

1. As Charsley argues, towards the end of his life, Srinivas realised that in his account of sanskritisation he has not addressed 'personal sanskritisation', that is, 'the deliberate adoption of a sanskritised life-style by individuals, which he had not previously sufficiently noticed' (1998: 544).
2. Probably, with this spirit, Béteille (2009) makes a distinction between sociology of religion and theology of religion.
3. We can read here passages such as the following in his 1967 essay, 'The Cohesive Role of Sanskritisation':

> One of the most important tasks confronts independent India is to draw all sections of India's heterogeneous population into the mainstream of national life while at the same time retaining what is valuable in Sanskrit thought and culture. To do this it is necessary for Hindus to accept the entire tradition to which all sections of the population have contributed, and for the latter to regard the Sanskrit heritage as their own. This can only be the result of slow process of cultural osmosis (Srinivas 2009: 235).

In the following passage in his essay, 'The Social Significance of Religion in India', we find that Srinivas did not valorise Hinduism as a tolerant religion: 'Hinduism is regarded as a tolerant religion both by its votaries and others [...] However

monotheism occurs in Hinduism at the sectarian level, and it is usually accompanied by intolerance towards other sects' (*ibid.*: 363).

Srinivas has been a critique of Hinduism from his first encounter with it in his MA thesis. As Charsley writes, 'Indeed a recurring theme in the book, the work of a modern and progressive young Brahmin is to challenge the patriarchal nature of Sanskritic culture and in particular its disadvantages for women' (1998: 535).

4. According to Srinivas,

> To the question whether the threat to religion from westernisation is common to all countries in the world and not something peculiar to Hinduism, the answer is that Christianity and Islam are probably better equipped to withstand westernisation because they have a strong organisation whereas Hinduism lacks all organisation excluding the caste system. If and when caste disappears, Hinduism may also disappear (2009: 217).

5. Charsely, however, urges us to realise that, despite such emphasis, Srinivas's sociology is not a Hindu sociology [personal communication].
6. *Upanishad* means to seat near by and discuss.
7. In a rare exercise, Nadkarni (2009) carries out a dialogue between methods of modern social sciences and insights from Bhagavad Gita.
8. It is worth noting what Béteille has to say about this: 'Perhaps it was a mistake to have presented the book-view and field-view as if they stood in complete mutual opposition. A comprehensive scheme for the understanding of Indian society and culture must find a place for the book-view as well as the field-view' (1996: 247). This also resonates with Oommen's plea for studying both the fields and the texts.
9. Srinivas admits that he looks at sanskritisation primarily in cultural terms, though it can also be looked at structurally: 'To describe social changes occurring in modern India in terms of sanskritisation and Westernisation is to describe it primarily in cultural and not structural terms. An analysis in terms of structure is much more difficult than an analysis in terms of culture' (2009: 212).
10. Note here what Shah writes: 'The concept of Sanskritic Hinduism, the foundation of the concept of sanskritisation, is essentially a culture concept' (2008: 398).
11. But here we need to keep in mind that those who wish to creatively cultivate their mother languages need not be necessarily at logger heads with Sanskrit. For example, Gandhi wrote in Gujarati but he read Sanskrit. In his essay 'Gandhi and Gita', Bakker helps us understand this: 'We need to be aware of the extent to which the articulation of Gandhian social philosophy is "Sanskrit-based". [...] In addition to his native Gujarati it was the study of Hindu (and Hindu-Buddhist) scriptures, often in the "original" Sanskrit, that influenced him most deeply' (1998: 225).
12. In his essay, 'The Social Significance of Religion in India', Srinivas writes, 'As a result of two centuries of contact with the West, the activist streak in Hinduism is receiving greater emphasis, the Bhagvad Gita is becoming the single most important book of the Hindus' (2009: 369).
13. It must be noted that when Britishers came the official language of the Mughal courts was Persian. We need to understand the dialectic of valorisation of Sanskrit in Orientalism as well as in the colonial government with Persian as well as mother language spaces of India.
14. Here we can compare Oommen's present critique of sanskritisation with his earlier critique of Srinivas's concept of dominant caste (Oommen 1970). It seems that the later critique is more foundational than the former. While his critique of dominant caste raises foundational questions to the very concept of dominant caste, in his critique of sanskritisation we do not find a parallel foundational critique, for example, of the conflation of language and social reality in this.

15. Oommen considers Saivism as the core of Dravidian Hinduism, but was there no relationship between Saivism in Tamil Nadu and Saivism in Kashmir?
16. From a comparative historical perspective, we can note similar processes of Orientalist influence in the construction of Buddhism in Thailand. This has been commented upon in discussing the work of Buddhist reformer Budhadasa Bikhu in Thailand (see Jackson 1987).
17. It is this pain that we must understand in the dynamics of social and cultural change. Srinivas's account of sanskritisation misses the pain of people who do not make it in their striving for emulation. As Oommen rightly argues, imitation also can be protest (see Rao 1979).
18. Oommen argues that a dialogue between Y.B. Damle and M.N. Srinivas on sanskritisation and reference group behaviour could have enriched the discussion and understanding of such issues in Indian sociology. For Oommen, Damle applied

> reference group theory to analyze mobility within caste. [...] Merton's unit of analysis in reference group behaviour is the individual who functions in American society characterised by acute individualism. The mechanism adopted is anticipatory socialisation, that is, gradually internalizing the norms and values of the group in which s/he aspires membership. It is an individual-group dynamic. [...]
>
> In contrast, given the fact that the Indian individual has little autonomy [...] and it is the lower castes which aspire to move upward, by adopting the norms and values of the upper castes, the dynamic involved is an inter-group one. Admittedly, M.N. Srinivas's formulation of sanskritisation can be justifiably described as the Indian variant of anticipatory socialisation. [...] By so doing the power of reference group theory could have been considerably enhanced. Unfortunately Damle has not attempted this and Srinivas has ignored reference group theory. To my mind this was a missed opportunity for Indian sociologists/social anthropologists for extending the frontiers of social theory (Oommen 2007b: 10-11).

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Book Reviews

A. Raghuramaraju: *Enduring colonialism: Classical presences and modern absences in Indian philosophy.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008, x + 153 pp., Rs 545 (hb). ISBN 978-0-19-569936-4

The book sets out to explore the nuances and reasons for the alleged absence of philosophical texts or systems in the last few centuries in India. Given the multiplicity of processes which had a bearing on such developments, the work negotiates the philosophically and historically daunting task by surveying some of the major schools of thought before charting out a course of its own. Orientalism, Marxism, and much of Weberian thinking claimed that there was not much in the classical Indian corpus which could be considered as philosophy. This is contrasted with works of Sudipta Kaviraj, Michael Dummett, Daya Krishna, and Krishnachandra Bhattacharyya's which claim that although philosophical systems had existed in India they were destroyed by colonialism. The author is more inclined to believe in Sheldon Pollock's thesis that Sanskrit philosophies and scholarship died its own death before the advent of Islam and colonialism. However, he wishes to explore the continuities which existed between Sanskrit and the vernaculars which rose from it rather than merely stop at the death of Sanskrit.

The author contends that although no significant philosophical text or system developed in the post-classical period there was a lot of philosophical activity. One type of activity was the analysis of available philosophical systems and an examination of their various conceptual and methodological armouries whilst the other type of activity focused on the building blocks of a new philosophical system by collecting raw materials from different sources. Much of the colonial period, it seems, was taken up by work of the latter sort and serious efforts were made in this direction. The author argues that 'philosophical work at this time largely consists, not in the advent of new systems but in a series of readjustments and reclaiming the past' (p. 10). What was being done was a reclaiming of the past without a faithful return to the past. The two characteristic features of this process were the use of English, instead of Sanskrit, and the inclusion of the 'masses' in the mainstream.

One example of the shift in language is the sterling work of Krishnachandra Bhattacharyya who used Kant and Hegel, not to superimpose their thinking on Indian thought, but to use, contra-distinguish, and highlight all the more the uniquely Indian pattern of thinking as exemplified by Advaita Vedanta. Bhattacharyya attempted to understand the past of an earlier age in terms of the present. Thus, the change from Sanskrit to English in the colonial period is not only to make Indian thought accessible to western categories and audiences, but also to enable the natives to have a better self-understanding. The reclaiming of the past also belied sensitivity to the masses. Much before the advent of Gandhi, Vivekananda and Aurobindo had pointed out the importance of taking care of the material and spiritual needs of the masses as an essential ingredient in the awakening of India. In making the case for extending philosophical discourse to the masses they emphasised on the need to borrow from the materialism of the West: 'So the virtues in western thought fill the gaps in Indian thought and the virtues in Indian thought fill the gaps in western thought, thus providing a perfect fit for a civilizational amalgam' (p. 15).

These works, however, failed to develop entirely new metaphysical systems. The author contends that it is the 20th century Indian text – Vaddera Chandidas' *Desire and Liberation: The Fundamentals of Cosmicontology* – which is a metaphysical text with a new worldview. The text has the added advantage of being informed by western and Indian classical and modern philosophies, and it goes beyond the above works 'in reinterpreting old Indian philosophical ideas for achieving an intrinsic dimension of self-understanding, changing interpretations, being open to the past, and reinterpreting traditional texts in terms of western categories' (p. 18).

There are four chapters devoted to the background architecture of Chandidas' work. Locating the text in the classical Indian and modern European discussion on negation, the author proceeds to survey the centrality of the notion of contradictoriness to the text. This is related to the ontic and ontological processual character of reality. There is further a discussion on the relation of this process to ontic and ontological fusion and finally the location of desire on the axis between fusion and process. This is followed by a discussion on Chandidas' ideas on aesthetics and creativity. One is also treated to an examination of the relation between perpetual making and the notion of Ultimate Reality (which is defined as not an all-inclusive substance), against a background discussion of causality, temporality, evolution, involution and convolution, and cosmo-logy.

In the concluding chapter, the book discusses Chandidas' views on liberation and desire and their implication for contemporary debates. Unfastening evanescence from the domain of desire, Chandidas relegates

> negation and permanence to a subordinate position as mere projections of the mind. Process is the essential reality and contradictoriness is its essential constituent... Chandidas depicts desire as not transitory but in fact continuous, which is sustained by contradictoriness. It is contradictoriness which denies any move towards final permanence and sustains reality continuously (p. 129).

The author contends that this notion of desire is more complex than that of the archetypical western philosopher, namely, Gilles Deleuze, because 'desire is further related to process, which is continuous, muti-directional, tuned to depth dimension through the route of intensification and continuously sustained through contradictoriness which has no absolute terminating points' (p. 129).

The author has done signal service to the philosophical community across the world by not only bringing centre-stage the debate on the historiography of philosophy in India, but also by highlighting a notion of desire and liberation which not only overcomes the more classical-modern formulations in the West, but which also has the potential to contribute to contemporary western discussions on emotions, sub-alternity, and postmodernism. Lastly, by ruling out both permanence and the possibility of permanence in the form of liberation, Chandidas' work is an important source of inspiration for social reformers.

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Badri Narayan: *Fascinating Hindutva: Saffron politics and dalit mobilization.* New Delhi: Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., 2009, xiii + 195 pp., Rs 295. ISBN: 978-81-7829-906-8

This book on identity politics or rather, a crisis of identity, begins with a folktale of Lalmuni Chiriya, to whom stories, centred on her own past, are narrated to arouse memories in such a way that her identity and existence both became interlaced with the king (symbolising political ideology) and to make her believe that in the king's welfare lies her welfare. Though we, the masses, are all Lalmuni Chiriyas, the book, based on original empirical data, is specifically addressed to the dalits

and the way the Hindutva forces are using myths, memories, heroes and legends of dalit castes and reinterpreting them in a 'hinduised' way by either projecting the heroes of these myths as brave Indian warriors who protected Hindu religion and culture from the Muslim invaders of the medieval period or to link the myths of the dalit castes with the unified Hindu meta-narratives represented by lord Rama, Rama being the global symbol in the modern socio-political scenario. In the whole process, the feeling of pride that communities have in their own identities is being slowly converted into a feeling of hatred for other communities.

Not surprisingly, past, memory and its remembrance in the form of 'pastness', has a vital role to play in shaping one's existence and identity. For instance, in chapter 1, memories of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad worker, Ramphalbhai, are used to create an ideal village where the upper castes are commanding an army of Dalits to fight their common enemy, Muslims. All the eight chapters, in fact, are about the use of 'memory' or 'past' in the construction of identity. In chapters 2 and 3, the myth of Suhaldev and Ghazi Mian is used by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to mobilise not only the Pasis and the upper-caste Hindus of Bahraich but also to construct a Hindu history against Islam, to bring all the Hindus under their fold. Similarly, Murli Manohar Joshi (ch. 4) while mobilising the Nishads invoked and glorified the memories of Eklavya and Nishadraj for their sacrifice and services to upper castes. One cannot help noticing a shift in the focus from global to the local, with the local being added to the global spaces.

But even memory is selective: what to remember and what to forget. The author has successfully demonstrated the recreation and reinterpretation of local myths and legends by Hindutva forces to fit into the overall political ideology of the party and the same myth may be interpreted in different ways, thus creating divided memories. For example, the myth of Dina-Bhadri (ch. 6), popular among the Musahars of North Bihar, is being used by BJP to mobilise the Musahars under its political fold. The myth is about the warrior life of Dina and Bhadri who came to the world to protect the poor labourers from the exploitation of rich landlords, but BJP has started projecting them as incarnations of Rama and Laxmana, who fought against the demon-like forces in society who used to oppress cows, women, and the common people. The Bharatiya Janata Party is highlighting only that portion of the myth which supports cow-protection and not their struggle against the contractors. The strong urge by the dalits themselves to seek acceptance from the upper caste Hindus helped BJP to mobilise them and, on the other hand, the reinterpretation of the past served as a tool for the dalit communities to seek and bargain for power. A language of mobilisation

which is being evolved is filled with references to those myths, legends and caste heroes that are relevant in the contemporary socio-political scenario and it gives rise to celebrations around them in the form of new rituals, festivals and statue-making and a new iconography has also emerged.

While documenting the cultural narratives of the politics of hate of the forces that are slowly corroding the social fabric of the country, the author mentions local spaces like fairs and wrestling which are being saffronised and as a result losing their secular flavour. No wonder, Muslims are moving out from the common spaces and forming their own associations.

Even the language and words of everyday use are being consciously chosen. Not only the Urdu words are avoided but the words in the local dialect are being replaced by a highly Sankritised Hindi. For example, Hindi word *desh* is replaced with the Sanskrit word *rashtra;* from the word *duniya-jahaan*, the component *jahaan*, which is of Urdu origin, has been dropped. Thus, the author concludes, there is a growing chasm between the Hindus and the Muslims under the influence of saffron politics and, on the other hand, the process of saffronisation of dalits is continuing.

Despite the interesting topic, repetitive arguments make it a tiring study. There was no need to stretch the myth of Suhaldev and Ghazi Mian into two separate chapters. Overall, it is an honest book written with good intentions and no wonder, the book is dedicated to the radical, emancipatory forces in society engaged in the struggle for social change. But are we intelligent enough, like a Lalmuni Chiriya, to see through the game or we would prove the old dictum true, 'The fool is happy and ... smiling'!

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Devi Sridhar (ed.): *Anthropologists inside organisations: South Asian case studies.* New Delhi: Sage Publications India Private Limited, 2008, xi + 170 pp., Rs 495 (hb). ISBN 978-81-7829-886-3

The book under review is a collection of seven essays on the fieldwork experiences of budding scholars. The studies cover issues related to education and health which are also included in the Millennium Development Goals and are important indicators for social development. The studies focus on South Asians located in South Asia or elsewhere

and use the anthropological approach and ethnographic methods. Most of the contributors have explained the difficulties they faced in data collection and none of them seems to have liked the label 'research scholars'. They note preliminary interactions in the field as the most difficult part of the research cycle. As we know from anthropological/ sociological studies, the first link to the new world often poses challenges, but it also gives academic pleasure and satisfaction. Socio-logists/social anthropologists have collected primary data even in very difficult situations and made the subject distinct from other social sciences. However, it appears that the trend seems to have changed.

The book reveals significant changes that have occurred in the field. The local people have lost their faith in the label 'research scholar'. The presence of interest groups and NGOs must be blamed for this. I remember my fieldwork in the Terai (the tribal region situated along the border between India and Nepal, between two ecological zones – hills and plains, and inaccessible and affected by naxalism) during 1998-2000, where many illegal and anti-state activities were taking place. The state police and local people suggested me not to enter the region. Interestingly, with the help of two NGOs, I was able to enter the field, spend more than a year there, and successfully complete my field studies. I learnt a few lessons during my fieldwork: do not hide your identity as a research scholar, do not try to impress the people, and do not act/move suspiciously in the field! These lessons bring a researcher closer to the people and field and make fieldwork an enjoyable exercise even in an alien region.

The concept of organising the book around fieldwork is old; decades back M.N. Srinivas and others had brought out a book on the same theme. However, this volume has taken up the issues which are relevant in the present context. The book begins with fieldwork experience of Nathan Grills on the sensitive faith-based organisation and the HIV-infected patients. Grills feels that the emotional nature of the field requires greater objectivity. Grills' reflection is similar to Guntupalli's work on the sex workers of Mumbai. Both Grills and Guntupalli admit that a line should always be drawn between being a researcher and being a human being. Sonali Srivastava discusses the difficulties of research work at a health centre located in a poor-resourced and politically unstable situation. She highlights the key role of the translator, where the researcher is not familiar with local conditions and language, in studying a culturally sensitive issue like female infanticide in Tamil Nadu. Sahid Parvez discusses the role of NGOs, which are professionally different from the academia. Devi Sridhar reports the difficulty in collecting data from World Bank.

The second section of the book focuses on educational organisations, which pose a different set of challenges for field studies. Prachi Srivastava reports her experience in conducting an exploratory study of low-fee private schools in Lucknow district of Uttar Pradesh. Initially, she based herself at the school gate and later accessed the schools through managing the gatekeeper, and maintained the access to the field despite local difficulties. Sadaf Rizvi presents here ethnographic study of a Muslim school in Britain. She mentions that the field study distracted her from research and subjected her to emotional stress due to her involvement in the politics of the school. Her participation in the faith activities at the school, she says, changed her spiritual outlook. David Lewis, an experienced scholar working with organisations in Bangladesh, concludes the volume by reflecting on organisational anthropology. Most of the contributors confess that they could not faithfully follow the conventional rule of objectivity during their field study.

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K.S. Bhat (ed.): *Towards social development: An anthology of C.D. Deshmukh memorial lectures.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications (in association with Council for Social Development, Hyderabad), 2008, xx + 235 pp., Rs 575 (hb). ISBN 81-316-0080-7

This book is a collection of C.D. Deshmukh Memorial Lectures delivered at the Council of Social Development, Hyderabad. It has been published in honour of C.D. Dshmukh, an eminent administrator, policy maker, scholar, and social worker. Contributors to this book are equally eminent persons who have held top positions in their respective fields of expertise. Being the texts of memorial lectures, however, the book cannot be expected to read like a research-based essays.

The book contains texts on eight different topics: five on economic planning and policy making, two on education, and one on media. Overall, the book cannot go under the rubric of social development, and, therefore, its title is misleading. A reader expecting to gain some insights on social development would be disappointed. This type of levelling only makes the concept of social development vague.

Let me selectively comment on the texts of some of the lectures. The text of C. Rangarajan's lecture on 'State and Market' is an important contribution. In the context of our re-looking at the role of the state and

the market, this essay contains wisdom of a key policy maker of our country. After aptly elaborating on the role of the state and the market, Rangarajan sums up, '... there is thus a role for the state and the market in an economy. What is needed is to determine the mix. Comparative efficiency in relation to each activity may be the determining factor. The ultimate test is what works best under given set of circumstances.' This should work as a good guideline for our reform process.

Ever since the process of reform started in our country and private investment in education has been encouraged, there is some debate on the role of the private sector in education. This debate often gives the impression that private investment in education is an aftermath of privatisation. In his lecture on 'Private Sector in Education', A. Vaidyanathan reminds us that private sector has involved in education since the colonial era. In view of the deficiency of the public sector, the private sector has played an important role in education in the post-independence period too. The private sector got an extra impetus during the post-reform period. Vadyanathan argues that increasing role of the private sector in education has contributed to making access to educational opportunities more unequal. In his lecture, B.P. Jeevan Reddy emphasises the importance of higher education, particularly in the context of globalisation where we need to compete internationally.

In his lecture, L.C. Jain shows how Deshmukh along with other founders of Indian polity had argued for self-government, which would lead to, to use Deshmukh's expression, 'ample life'. The title of his lecture, 'India Today: Self-Government is the Only Remedy', expresses this point well. Jain discusses the maladies in realising the ideal of self-government. Reflections on the remedying these maladies are what we need most today. Although some states have made considerable progress in making local-self government a reality, they have fallen short of realising the dictum 'self-government is the best government'. The question that remains to be answered is how do we transform self-government into best government?

Arguing that media power has declined, in his lecture 'Media Power, Roles and Social Responsibility' N. Ram has quoted Patnaik's observation that 'the power of the media as an institution has gone down greatly in India in the nineties'. This may be particularly true about the ability of the media to influence election verdicts. Negative press-reporting about the actions of a political party does not often prevent the party from winning elections. For instance, sustained press-reporting depicting the stalling of the process of development by a political party by opposing land acquisition for development projects, or about organised communal violence by a political party, did not stand in way

of their winning elections. The erosion of the role of the press is a matter of concern for a democracy. Ram has drawn our attention to that.

In the remaining lectures, M. Narasimham has discussed the reform measures we need to take up, R. Sankaran has documented pro-poor policy components in the Five-Year Plans, and C.H. Hanumantha Rao has depicted the picture of food grain security in our country and suggested the way to transform it into food security.

We learn from the 'Forward' that these lectures were delivered during 'the last ten years or so'. A mentioning of the date when a particular lecture was delivered would have been useful.

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Lisa S. Price: *Feminist frameworks: Building theory on violence against women.* Delhi: Aakar Books, 2009, 127 pp., Rs 325 (hb). ISBN 978-81-89833-86-2

Lisa S. Price envisions that *Feminist Frameworks* will provide the readers with a base and structure for analysis and conceptual understanding of men's violent, intimidating, and coercive behaviour towards women and children. She presents a picture of the state of feminist knowledge about male violence against women and children, and draws reader's attention of the readers to the horror of 'violence against women' and its aftermath, and offers a partial antidote to despair and immobilising rage. The book's theme is unique: Price goes beyond analysing violence against women to highlight the importance of ensuring male participation in stopping violence against women.

Price's frameworks are firmly grounded on the pioneering radical individual feminist writings on male violence. She says that some of the insights contained in the texts by Brownmiller, Dobash, Hanmer, and others remain as fresh today as they as when they were first written in the 1970s and 1980s. She argues that women's oppression by men is fundamentally a gendered and learnt behaviour that is intentional, pan-historical, and cross-cultural. The driving force behind her writing this book are events such as the 'Montreal Massacre' (1989), wife-battering incidents and war rapes happening across the world.

Price begins the discussion on violence against women by saying that, for around thirty-five years, feminists of the contemporary women's movement have carried out socio-legal advocacy, worked to identify issues of violence against women, to provide services to women and

children affected by male violence. This has resulted in a shift in the position of women facing violence, from being victims to survivors with the courage and determination. Her exploration of feminist discourses on the ideological and structural aspects of patriarchy from a sociological perspective reveals that violence is socially embedded and that oppression, social control, and dominance form the key functions of patriarchy that keep violence against women alive across societies. The debate about 'violence is sex' and 'sex is violence' makes her look at MacKinnon's critique of sex and sexuality closely and understand that gender-power-sexuality are tied together when it comes to male sexual violence towards women. This leads to a brief discussion about feminist jurisprudence and feminist interventions such as human rights approach to pornography in Canada, civil action against pornography in the United States and Johns' schools in the United States and Canada.

Price relies on the 'standpoint epistemology' position within the feminist research methodology. According to her, it is the best way, as it involves willingness to listen to women, to identify with them, and a commitment to understand that no woman is free until all women are free. Such a knowledge-building approach helps in bridging the gap between theory and practice as it brings about interaction between thought and action. Price here adds that well-known feminist theorists in the past have grounded their work in the experiences of women who live in cultures that hate them.

Feminist research lays emphasis on the relationship between the researcher and the researched and on the principle of 'strong reflexivity' where the researcher needs to analyze her/his beliefs, and acknowledge social situatedness of the research subject and cultural particularity of the research objects. In this light, Price notes that she has been trying to establish a connection and develop a sense of solidarity between her feelings and experiences female victims of male violence. She states that delving into women's experiences helps us understand male violence from a choice and accountability perspective rather than pathologising it. However, while doing so, feminist researchers face a dilemma caused by 'blurring' of boundaries between them and the women survivors of violence. It may be intensified for women researchers who are 'insiders' to the communities.

Price moves beyond discussing and analysing violence against women. She argues that the *'Verstehen'* or the interpretive approach propagated by Max Weber will help us in understanding violent behaviour of men towards women and children and also changing the same. However, she realises that a self-reflexive stance of a researcher makes her feel uncomfortable as a woman. Price candidly admits that the

self-reflexivity does benefit her in multiple ways. It enlightens her not to 'other' or alienate the violent men and to not dismiss them as incomprehensible. It saves her from being dehumanised about violence against women incidents and to women whose accounts she wishes to understand. This thought propounded by Price about understanding male violence against women from the male point of view is a significant methodological contribution to the feminist research methodology and the forever-changing discourses on development.

Price mentions that the classification and arrangement of definitions, tracing their origins, understanding the process of men's sexual violence is a mammoth task that posed innumerable challenges. At a macro level, the effort of stopping violence against women she puts across will require continuous and struggle on part of the theorists and activists.

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Mohammad Akram (ed.): *Health dynamics and marginal communities.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2007, xx + 283 pp., Rs 625. ISBN 81-316-0079-3

Sociology in public health is reflected in the myriad of sociological concepts that pervade the theoretical and practical discourse on public health. In sociological discourse, social-class variation within society is a key explanatory variable which captures differential life-experiences of health and illness of different communities. The present book is an attempt to present the various issues related to health and illness of the marginalised communities in India. The greatest strength of this book lies in its holistic methodology, which combines both theoretical frameworks and empirical realities.

The book contains fifteen articles on various health-related issues. A thread that runs through the book is the exploration and analysis of how the marginalised communities such as rural people, tribal people, and persons living with STDs and HIV/AIDS are discriminated in the health care system. The volume is divided into three thematic sections: conceptual and constitutional issues; health, disease, and social structure; and health expenditure and insurance.

The first section has four articles. Sujata Krishnamurthi explains how public health care system in India is deficient and how in recent times health deprivation is becoming a phenomenon of class deprivation. The second section has nine articles. Madhu Nagla has done a commendable

job in bringing out the importance of culture in understanding patterns of health care system in urban and rural settings. In the third section, P.R. Sodani uses the data from a representative sample of households residing in tribal sub-plan region of Rajasthan to investigate health-seeking behaviour and household health care expenditure. Akash Acharya analyzes the initiatives undertaken by NGOs in Gujarat in mitigating the health needs of the marginalised sections of the society.

Although the book covers a variety of topics, as the title indicates, all articles are concerned with the health aspect of the marginalised communities in India. The book highlights the nature and urgency of the major problems confronting health today.

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Peter Ronald deSouza, Sanjay Kumar and Sandeep Shastri (ed.): *Indian youth in a transforming world: Attitudes and perceptions.* New Delhi: Sage Publications India, 2009, xxix + 176 pp., Rs 695 (pb). ISBN 978-81-321-0171-0

Sociological and psychological studies of how the shifting landscapes of tradition and modernity reach into youth lives in India remain largely mired in the quantitative tradition of attitude surveys. Peter Ronald deSouza, Sanjay Kumar, and Sandeep Shastri, in continuation with this research tradition, present a nationwide survey of young people's attitudes towards a range of issues that are broadly organised into seven 'personal/experiential' and 'political historical' themes. This survey of 5,000 young people between the ages of 14 and 34 years includes a charting of their social worlds (friends, trust circles), their attitudes to parental authority (towards parental influence on their marital choices in particular), their leisure pursuits and lifestyles, their interest and participation in politics and their faith in democracy, their opinion about governance, development and globalisation, and their aspirations and anxieties about the future. Simple statistical analysis shows how these attitudes vary across gender, socio-economic status, and urban versus rural. In addition, the study intersperses the main survey findings with short case studies that the editors claim provide snapshots of youth life.

Briefly, the study reports that friends and trust circles remain largely limited to the same gender, caste, and religion; that most youth in India welcome parental authority to influence important life decisions; that there is a high level of political participation – informal or formal – and a

high faith in democracy; and that all these factors vary in predictable ways with gender, socio-economic status and location. Career aspirations are reported to be higher among dalit and tribal youth and youth living in small towns rather than cities or villages. Poverty and unemployment were endorsed as the two main agendas to be targeted by the government, with this being most keenly endorsed by those with an insecure relation to the economy. Another finding is that awareness about larger social dynamics as accruing from globalisation remains limited to upper socio-economic status youth.

Methodologically, the book flounders many times, as it ventures beyond a reporting of these basic and not very surprising findings. A major flaw is that, for a study with the stated aim of understanding change and aiding comparison with youth elsewhere in the world, there is little linkage to existing research (nine poorly referenced survey studies are presented in boxes and loosely scattered in the main text across the chapters). For instance, higher level of political interest among Indian youth as compared to youth in the developed world is described without any reference to existing research. This claim is based on interest in politics (32%), voting behaviour (60%), and participation in non-formal politics (30%). Leaving aside how these percentages can be interpreted to mean a high participation in politics, sampling a majority of the participants from electoral rolls also biases the sample when the aim is to study voting behaviour. Finally, the content validity of other indices used for assessing interest in politics is also debatable, a charge that can be levelled against other constructs studied as well. Thus, faith in democracy is assessed using items that endorse the necessity of political parties and an opposition party for democracy and the importance of free speech rather than through items that directly question young people's faith in democracy. The dubious claim that the dalit and the tribal youth have higher aspirations than forward caste youth is also part explained when examining how aspiration is assessed – desire to achieve more than others and goal achievement.

The case studies provide interesting glimpses into youth lives; however, many show simplistic (most are a page long) and sometimes incoherent analysis, and one is even rife with moral judgements of female sexuality (case study 7). The exceptions to this are the case studies describing spaces for political resistance afforded by the digital revolution in Manipur, first person narratives of young women straddling modernity and tradition in Kerala, and the case study of how the call centre is a space for negotiation of economic and cultural modernity. Also questionable is the synergy between the approaches adopted in most

case studies (discourse analysis, postmodern ethnography, and feminist theory) and the attitude surveys they are said to supplement.

The limited theorising that tries to haul the study above a presentation of basic patterns is also conceptually flawed. A key idea developed is that youth attitudes and practices in India are the same as that of youth elsewhere if given the same opportunities (education, exposure); therefore, they are not reflective of tradition but represent only 'practices' and, therefore, that there is one route to modernity rather than multiple routes. When the modern self is itself defined by choice, this is a form of tautological reasoning where an artificial divide is introduced between two concepts ('opportunity'/'practice' and tradition) that are essentially one.

The book is an easy read, not least because of the useful deployment of many pie-charts and graphs in every page. Photographs and interesting excerpts from magazines also give the report a journalistic, rather than an academic flavour. The front and back covers – a close-up of jeans, which the authors claim are a pan-Indian youth motif – and the predominance of images that represent an urban middle-class milieu gives the book a 'hip and stylish', if non-representative appearance. SAGE has brought to the study excellent packaging, with glossy covers and high paper and print quality; this is reflected in the pricing – a hefty Rs 695.

In conclusion, while the book does not rate favourably in terms of academic writing (methodological rigour, abstracting theory from data), it redeems itself somewhat in the scale of its geographic ambition – it is the first nationwide study to systematically interview large numbers of young people. As such, it provides interesting snapshot *information* on how the modernity-tradition interface pans out in youth attitudes and perceptions. The book would probably most benefit advertising professionals or market researchers (as the back-cover suggests) rather than students of sociology/psychology (also suggested by the editors) or academicians.

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Pranab Kanti Basu: *Globalisation: An anti-text.* Delhi: Aakar Books, 2008, 231 pp., Rs 450 (hb). ISBN 978-81-89833-53-4

The book under review dwells on the sociological debate on the dialectics between the macro and the micro aspects of globalisation which lies at the intersection of the *global* and the *local.* Specifically, it

offers a critique of global capital and its invasion of national capital: appropriation of profit in the form of rent. It unravels the nature, character, and dynamics of the international economic organisations such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the key players of the global capital.

The major part of the book originated as a series of articles written in Bengali from a critical Marxist perspective for a regional bimonthly. This was an initiative from a few left humanists, and the book was borne from an awareness of the criticism that the left parties and political groups in India have not given much thought to the mutation of imperialism during the latter half of the 20th century. Worse still, they remain in oblivion of the left position and leftist approach to new imperialism. The author's attempt at constructing an 'anti-text' of globalisation is unique, as it offers a critique of both new imperialism in the age of globalisation and the Marxist/leftist lack of criticality in addressing this tyranny.

The main contention of the 'anti-text' revolves around the idea that globalisation necessarily involves the process of annulment of community rights and even individual bourgeois legal rights of the developing countries. It shatters the myth that sustains the hegemony of the global order by the deification of the free market as the most efficient system for the solution of economic problems of society in the present age. In chapter two, the author argues convincingly that the extension of the global capital orchestrated through international organisations weakens the power of the governments to influence economic decisions. As a result, vital resources such as land, water, and even community knowledge turn out to be private, marketable commodities, working according to the logic of the market through the intrusion of the global capital. This process makes the dispossessed communities the refugees of development in their native land. The author also points out the ironical character of the development economics initiated by the global capital that employs certain palliative measures. This is well illustrated in the case of Sardar Sarovar Project, wherein WB appears to uncover its 'humane mask' when it hugely invested in large dams while engaging actively in rehabilitation projects. The book then elaborates the operations of each of the forces of global capital such as IMF, WB, and WTO, and exposes the rule of dollar that permeates the flow of global capital and unleashes the primitive capital accumulation.

The fraction of Indian capital that becomes a part of global capital with the same aspirations also grabs local capital for the benefit of the global capital. The author elucidates the dynamics of the over-determined totality of the political – underworld nexus within the nation

that has a parallel to the main characters involved in the play of globalisation at the global level. Theoretical constructs of primitive accumulation of capital and over-determination are used to explain the interlocking of global capital with the local. In the course of constructing the 'anti-text' through these conceptual frameworks, the author critiques the Keynesian and classical economic theories that support globalisation.

Although firmly rooted in a broad Marxist perspective, the author tries to transcend the typical Marxist jargon in understanding the vicissitudes of global capital. Strikingly, the book proposes a fusion of Marx and Gandhi in the struggle against the neo-imperialistic invasion, envisioning it as a struggle for *Swaraj* by fighting against the rent-extracting global capital. Nevertheless, the argument of the book for a vision of an alternative course of development founded on the principle of 'construction and struggle' remains an abstract idea. The author seems to offer only a few categorical and normative propositions with no concrete mode of action other than the usual Marxist appeal to the working class. In this context, little mention has been made on the growing indigenous struggles by dalits and tribal people all over the country for basic resources such as land and water that the global capital tends to appropriate in the context of the oppressive neo-liberal economic and political policies of the state.

The author claims to have designed the book as a common person's guide to the logic of international economic organisations; so a prior knowledge of either theory or economics is not expected from the reader. However, the overall style and format of the book does not seem to fully vouchsafe it. The book appears to be more a product of erudition than experience and more textual than empirical which may not be easy to digest for someone outside the academic arena. Furthermore, with inadequate empirical evidence and illustrations, the book appears to border reductionism, seemingly attributing to globalisation all the problems of contemporary society – from poverty to unemployment to death, from hunger and malnutrition to terrorism. However, the highlight of the book is that it convincingly argues against the orthodox opinion on the nature and benefits of globalisation and the working of the global capital. In this sense, it is truly an 'anti-text' of globalisation which can be used as a reliable resource material for academicians, activists, policy makers, and the like.

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P.S. Vivek: *From indentured labour to liberated nation: Public policy and small planters in Mauritius.* Bangalore: Focus Press Private Limited, 2007, xxv + 392 pp., Rs 525 (pb). ISBN 81-900484-8-1

Colonialism as a form of capitalism enforced exploitation and hence uneven development in the colonies. The Indian indentured labour imported into many of the colonies controlled by the British, the French, and the Dutch were the result of the demand created by the colonial economy after the abolition of slavery in the early 19th century. In the book under review, P.S. Vivek examines the public policy of the Mauritius rulers towards the plantation workers who were predominantly of Indian origin.

The opening chapter discusses the history of the land and the development of sugar plantation and industry and the political economy revolving around it. Mauritius, an island located in the Indian Ocean, had a unique colonial past as compared to other African colonies. It had the distinction of successive presence of three European communities: the Dutch, as early as 1510, followed by French, which lasted little over a century, and the British, who ruled till 1968. Indian communities constitute an overwhelming majority in Mauritius.

The second chapter, an extension of the first, analyzes the context in which the political economy of Mauritius is being shaped. The author has touched upon a wide variety of issues such as demographic composition, vital statistics, climate, and marine resources to assess the development potential of the country. The third chapter provides a historical account of the emigration of the Indian labour to Mauritius and of their settlement experience under British rule. The chapter also highlights various discriminatory policies adopted by the British rulers in granting land rights and other economic benefits to the Indian settlers.

The fourth chapter is about the public policy vis-à-vis market in the context of sugarcane industry. Sugar had a colonial history: it was introduced by the Dutch in 1639 and continued by the French and the British rulers. However, over the years, the economy based on sugar had undergone changes due to the unavoidable political-economic changes both within and outside Mauritius. This chapter outlines various intervention mechanisms and reforms initiated by the government. The post-1990s, which is known as the liberalisation phase, saw a new change in the economic scenario. The World Trade Organisation regime and the European Union policy on sugar had cascading effect on the sugar-exporting industries in Mauritius influencing the investment as well as the prices in the international market. The liberalised phase, which the author describes as the 'new sugar regime', discouraged

sugarcane production in poor countries like Mauritius. As an antidote, Mauritius initiated structural reforms in the sugar industry which led to better performance. The chapter provides an account of how the liberalised economy affects the poor economy and hence the livelihood of the dependents, that is, farmers as well as plantation labour.

Chapters six and seven highlight the problems and prospects of indentured labour, especially Indian farmers and their strategies to co-operate with the adversities. The exploitation of the Indian indentured labour by the planters as well as police was gradually resisted by the labour. An inquiry committee was set up in 1872 and subsequently a New Labour Law was passed in 1878 to protect the interests of the labour and to grant some minimum rights. The last two chapters (eight and nine) provide policy suggestions and some guidelines that can be considered as a development strategy for sugarcane industry as well as the labour dependent on it.

The main drawback of the book is that many of the chapters are loosely constructed and follow no logic while sequencing the sections and subsections within the chapter. Several tables and data are provided in almost all the chapters which have very little relevance in the context they are used. The introductory chapter reads like a preface and acknowledgement, instead of a cogent analysis of the conceptual framework of the research. A serious student of the Indian diaspora would hardly miss this book!

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Smita Mishra Panda (ed.): *Engendering governance institutions: State, market and civil society.* New Delhi: Sage Publications India Private Limited, 2008, 369 pp., Rs 950 (hb). ISBN 978-0-7619-3608-4

The volume under review in an outcome of a workshop on 'Gender and Governance' held on 15-16 December 2004 at the Institute of Rural Management, Anand. The contributors to the volume belong to different disciplines and professions but have been engaged with the issue of gender and governance for several years. Divided into five sections, the volume contains fifteen conceptual and empirical essays addressing the issue of engendering governance. Majority of these essays focus on engendering state institutions; civil society and market, however, are held no less significant vis-à-vis the state in contemporary times. There is a wide consensus in the volume that market or private sector and civil

society have become equal actors in the field of governance and they cannot be ignored in any deliberations on 'empowerment'.

Editorial introduction by Smita Mishra Panda is copious and meticulous. In explaining the concept of engendering institutions she attempts to sketch the historical context in which the concept originated and assumed significance. She expresses her unease at the Indian government's lack of will to adopt 'Gender and Development' approach; the government finds it convenient to use the older framework of 'Women in Development', which is confined to addressing women's practical needs leaving aside the strategic gender needs.

The opening essay by Kumud Sharma touches upon 'gender mainstreaming'. She distinguishes between the integrationist approach of mainstreaming from the transformative approach. Transformative strategies are definitely more ambitious than the integrationist. J. Devika takes stock of People's Planning Campaign (PPC) in Kerala which was implemented in mid 1990s as an important experiment in mainstreaming gender. Devika turns to the reports on PPC activities which show the systematic curbing of strategic gender needs. In one instance, she finds that the schemes for training girls in self-defence techniques was generally ridiculed, while others which simply distributed sewing machines to women were readily approved.

The paper by Sangeetha Purushotaman and Suchita Vedant is about engendering governance through Mahila Samakhya in Karnataka. It shows how the federations of women's *snagha*s (collectives) have emerged as a force and an organisational form playing a new and important role in transforming and challenging traditional governance hierarchies and practices, and eventually leading towards engendered governance.

Bidyut Mohnaty's paper on democratic decentralisation through reservations of seats in Panchayat Raj Institutions demonstrates that all women are not proxy candidates and several women who have entered panchayat bodies have played an instrumental role in changing development agenda at village level. She cites several instances from different parts of India where it appears that whenever elected women representatives are assisted by panchayat-friendly NGOs, Mahila Samakhya, or political groups, they start functioning well in panchayat institutions.

Engendering participatory urban governance is the theme of Girija Shrestha's paper. It discusses the Urban Management Programme – a global UNDP programme executed by United Nations Human Settlement Programmes designed to improve the contributions of cities and towns to sustainable development through improved urban management. The

cases of some cities like Lalitpur, Delhi, Phnom Penh, and Vientiane are presented to show how they bring the agenda of local women and disadvantaged groups into the planning and decision-making through participation.

The two essays in the third section talk about engendering market. Nirmala Banarjee points out that market now stands fully vindicated as the policies aimed at controlling it have been fully or largely dismantled. The paper on Self Employed Women's Associations (SEWA) in Gujrat provides some hope in the direction of engendering market. In response to the demand for creating sustainable livelihood strategies through development of optimal business models and establishing strong linkages with mainstream market systems, the SEWA Grameen Mahila Haat (SGMH) and the SEWA Trade Facilitation Centre (STFC) were established as arms of SEWA. The empirical case studies of SEWA experiments incorporated in this paper are ideal examples of engendered civil society with efficient national and international market linkages which has enabling implications for poor and marginal women.

In the fourth section, there are three essays on civil society, gender, and governance. Indu Agnihotri provides a nuanced understanding of World Bank floated terminologies like 'empowerment', 'participation', and 'decentralisation'. She maintains that these ideas are deceptive because they are used to veil the nature and effects of power, and they hold on the prospect of democracy without the inconveniences of contestational politics. Constructive criticism has informed the politics of women's movement and an uncritical acceptance of neo-liberal agenda of funding agencies would be dangerously self-defeating. Ratna M. Sudarshan maps out engendered governance through the case studies of Shilling district in Almora and some of the slum clusters in East Delhi. Both the cases show that women mobilised outside the local governance system by NGOs are able to exert significant influence in moulding the development priorities upon entering governance. Vibhuti Patel's paper is about gender audit. She provides an overview of gender audits of policies and programmes that have deconstructed and re-constructed gender relations in India in post-independence period and have implications for engendering governance.

Overall, the volume makes a significant contribution in terms of conceptualising 'engendering institutions' which is considered crucial from the viewpoint of institutionalising democratic gender politics within the system of governance at various levels.

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Vinita Pandey: *Crisis of urban middle class.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2009, xxi + 226 pp., Rs 575 (hb). ISBN 81-316-0217-6

This is an interesting book that provides insights into the identity crisis and isolation experienced by the urban middle class in the post 1990s' economic liberalisation phase of Indian society. Vinita Pandey has made an in-depth study of the urban middle class in Hyderabad, which is well known as the cyber city where IT institutions and call centres abound and a large population is working in the service sector.

Pandey rightly points out that the present urban middle class is in a phase of transition and crisis. It is not exactly as it was earlier portrayed as highly flourishing, hypocritical, and self-centred class. The identity crisis and isolation faced by the urban middle class of is deeply rooted in the nature of economy: the very insecure world of the service sector, the scenario of global economic recession, and the sense of helplessness due to the socio-economic and cultural changes. The uprooted existence of a majority of the migrant population within the city has led to an insecure society or community of people. The book attempts to highlight the crisis of urban middle class, its causes and consequences.

In the Preface, Pandey defines and explains the concept of middle class and traces the origin of the Indian middle class to the British rule and the introduction of English education in India. However, she makes a clear distinction between the middle class prior to and post the economic liberalisation of the 1990s. The contemporary middle class in our cities, she says,

> Woke up to the changed socio-economic scenario in India which was transforming itself due to the policies of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation ... on the one and on the other, it changed the educational and occupational structure too. Professional education gained significance but required large investment. Further, the private sector jobs gave the income but not security. Also, the phase of lay-offs and retrenchment created a gloomy stage. The changes in the family structure, redefined neighbourhoods and also in the notion of recreation, growing caste and religious intolerance have all created a strange combination of situations (p. x).

It is under these socio-economic and cultural conditions that Pandey has examined the problem of identity and isolation of the middle class in Hyderabad. The choice of Hyderabad city for her empirical study was apt as it highlights the issues succinctly. She explains her research methodology in the second chapter, and the subsequent four chapters

deal with the problems of social crisis, isolation, identity, and social-cultural changes respectively.

In the concluding chapter, Pandey analyzes the inferences drawn from the study. Some of these changes which she has outlined are related to the very definition of middle class in India. It is apparent that middle class has changed over a period of time and place in terms of its heterogeneity and its intermediate location. She explains how changing and growing heterogeneity in the occupational structure of Hyderabad requires a different definition and understanding of the middle class.

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1. *Sociological Bulletin* welcomes original articles. Articles (not exceeding 6,000-8,000 words) must be typed on one side of the paper, double-spaced, with wide margins on all four sides. An abstract (not exceeding 100 words) must accompany the article.

2. In the first instance, send only the hard copy of the typescript (two copies). If the article is accepted for publication, the contributor(s) will be required to send the soft copy of the article as an Email attachment processed on MSWord for Windows.

3. Within the text, adopt the author-date method of citation minus the comma, for example, (Lobo 2002). If more than one work of an author is cited, separate the years of publication with a comma (Pandey 1996, 1999). Separate the page numbers of citations by a colon (Uberoi 2002: 264) and hyphenate the inclusive numbers (Uberoi 2002: 264-65). When more than one author is cited, the entries should be chronological with works of different authors separated by a semicolon (Omvedt 1990; Hasan 1994; Mayaram 1997). For co-authored works, cite both names (Jayal and Pai 2001); for works authored by three or more authors, use '*et al.*' after the first name (Patel *et al.* 2002). If a citation is repeated within a paragraph without intervening citations, use *ibid.*, instead of repeating the author's name again, and provide the relevant page number(s) (*ibid.*: 32). If gazetteers, reports and works of governmental organisations and other institutions are cited, mention the name of the organisation/institution sponsoring the publication in the citation, fully spelt out at its first occurrence (Government of India 2003), and use its abbreviation/acronym in subsequent citations (GOI 2003).

4. Give separately the bibliographic details of all works cited in the article under **References** in the following sequence: (a) Article: the name(s) of the author(s); the year of publication; title of the article (within single inverted commas); the name of the journal (italicised); and the volume number, the issue number, and the beginning and ending page numbers. (b) Chapter in an edited work or compilation: the name(s) of the author(s); the year of publication; title of the chapter (within single inverted commas); the name(s) of the editor(s)/compiler(s); title of the book (italicised); the beginning and ending page numbers of the chapter; place of publication; and the name of the publisher. (c) Book: the name(s) of the author(s); the year of publication; title of the book (italicised); place of publication; and the name of the publisher. The listing in References must follow the alphabetical order of the last name of the (first) author. For illustrations, see any recent issue of the *Bulletin*.

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6. Tables, charts, maps, figures, etc. are to be placed separately at the end of the article. Number these serially, with appropriate titles/captions. Refer to them in the text by their number -- Table 5, Figure 2, Map 1, etc. -- and not by their location--for example, the above table, the figure below, etc.

7. Cite sentences or words taken from other works with single quotation marks; use double quotation marks only within quotations. Separate quotations exceeding fifty words from the text and indent them on the left. Unless the entire sentence is part of the quotation, the punctuation must remain outside the quotation marks.

8. Use British, rather than American, spellings (labour, not labor; programme, not program). Similarly, use 's', rather than 'z', in 'ise', 'ising', 'isation' words. Authors have latitude as regards italicisation, but italicisation needs to be consistent in the article.

9. Write numerals between one and ninety-nine in words, and 100 and above in figures. However, the following are to be in figures only: distance: 3 km; age: 32 years old; percentage: 64 per cent; and years: 1990s.

10. Contributors are required to provide on a separate sheet their name, designation, official address and Email ID. Only articles which have not been published earlier or which are not being considered for publication elsewhere will be entertained. A declaration to this effect must be included in the covering letter.

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Sociological Bulletin

JOURNAL OF THE INDIAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ARTICLES

BOOK REVIEWS

The Pasts and Futures of Anthropology and Sociology: Implications of Shifting Locations

T.K. Oommen

The disciplines of anthropology and sociology had divergent trajectories and hostile relations in Europe where they originated. However, in the process of their being transplanted into other locations their relationships have undergone changes. In the New World of Americas and Australia, which experienced 'replicative colonialism', the distinction between sociology and social/cultural anthropology is maintained. In contrast, in the Old World of Asia and Africa, which experienced 'retreatist colonialism', the relationship between these disciplines is ambiguous. The other factor which impacts on the shaping of relationship between these disciplines in their new locations has to do with their orientations to the object of their study. In the New World the cultural differences between the colonisers and immigrants, on the one hand, and the 'natives', on the other, are maintained. In contrast, in the Old World the effort is to 'integrate'/'assimilate' the 'tribes' into the mainstream. This paper analyzes the relationship between sociology and social/cultural anthropology with special reference to three locations: West-Europe, North America, and South Asia.

[Keywords: anthropology and the other; globalisation of sociology and anthropology; replicative and retreatist colonialism; shifting locations; sociology and the nation-states]

Both modern anthropology and sociology[1] emerged in Europe but at different points in time and in different political circumstances to meet drastically different purposes. In spite of this, there has been considerable convergence between these disciplines outside Europe. To ignore their initial divergences and focus only on their subsequent convergences is to indulge in 'retreat into the present' (Elias 1987) relegating the specificities of their trajectories. At any rate, to project the 'futures' of sociology and anthropology it is necessary to recall their 'known pasts'

which impact on and have implications for shifting locations of these disciplines. Both sociology and anthropology had passed through two distinct 'locations' – colonial state and nation-state – and are at present in the throes of a third location, the 'post-national' globalising world. I propose to argue that the processes implicated in the crystallisation of these locations, namely, colonialism, nationalism, and globalism, have deeply moulded the career of these disciplines. To explicate the argument I shall attempt a broad but brief comparison of sociology and anthropology in three locations – West Europe, where they originated, and North America and South Asia, wherein they were transplanted.[2]

I

There is no consensus about the time of origin of academic anthropology (cf. Hodgen 1964; Harris 1968), but there is broad agreement on two counts: (i) anthropology flowered during the colonial period and (ii) the essence of the anthropological perspective is to study the Other, because it enables a better understanding of one's own society. European anthropologists analysed three others – Savage, Black, and Ethnographic – who were different racially and culturally and located at a great distance in time and space from Europe. The assumption regarding the temporal distance entailed a value judgement; the others studied were believed to be located at a low ebb in the evolutionary chain. The allusion to spatial distance was a fact in that the others were 'elsewhere peoples' (Trouillot 2003) located at geographically distant sites far away from Europe. These two 'distances' in conjunction also facilitated the conception that the others are inferiors.

The Savage Other was assigned the lowest rung in the hierarchy of the great chain of being according to Western/Christian doctrine of monogenesis that endorsed a common origin for all human beings. It is true that savages did exist in Europe, for example, the Samis of Scandinavia and the Highlanders of Scotland, but they were culturally absorbed into the European mainstream although with low esteem. But it is the discovery of the New World – the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand – which facilitated the assigning of savages to distant locations, temporal and spatial, with very low status; the New World was perceived as the epicentre of Savages. While project homogenisation launched by the institution of nation-state in Western Europe facilitated the absorption of savages, in the New World the colonisers recognised and maintained the racial and cultural differences between them and the savages. But the fact that the native Red Indian was not perceived as

racially inferior to the migrant white and the eventual recognition of savages as human beings with souls by Christianity and their conversion into that religion led to the conceptual liquidation of the Savage. According the H. White,

> ... the idea of the Wild Man (read savage) was progressively despatialized. This despatialization was attended by a compensatory process of psychic interiorization. And the result has been that modern cultural anthropology has conceptualized the idea of wildness as the repressed content of *both* civilized *and* primitive humanity (1972: 7, italics in the original).

The Black Other, with its territorial location in Africa, was the other Other in anthropology (Thornton 1983). Black Africa became the preferred site for field work for European anthropologists. The Black Other, as an inferior Other, found easy acceptance in Europe. As Y.D. Nash notes, 'In English image black became a partisan word. A black sheep in the family, a black mark against one's name, a black day, a black look, a black lie, a black guard, and a black ball all were expressions built into cultural consciousness' (1974: 162-63). Probably this facilitated the export of Black Africans during the colonial period to the Americas. But their mode of incorporation determined their status at the points of arrival; if in the United States of America their initial incorporation was as slaves, in Brazil, thanks to the policy of 'racial democracy', they were conferred some dignity and equity (see Fernandes 1969). The differences in social status accorded to the Black Other in different locations – Africa, North America, and Latin America ·· has also impacted the discipline of anthropology in these spaces. Gradually, the focus shifted from Savage Other to Black Other (see Barker 1998).

Gradually, the biological basis of human superiority/inferiority anchored to race and the justification given to the practice of racism has come to be interrogated through research in physical anthropology in North America. The race-culture antinomy delinked race and culture; the attempt was to underplay the distinctions based on race and deny the practice of racism. At any rate, 'American anthropologists deliver inchoate messages about anthropological understandings of race and racism' (Shanklin 2000). In fact, the American Anthropological Association has already recommended to the US Government to eliminate the term race from the 2010 census because research in human genome shows that DNA of human beings is 99.9 per cent alike irrespective of their physical characteristics. This points to the gradual conceptual liquidation of the Black Other as a racial category. In contrast, the prevalence of cultural diversities is focused upon, perhaps over empha-

sised. As early as the 1920s, it was claimed that 600 separate cultures which can be grouped into seven cultural types existed in the USA (Wissler 1923). Perhaps this explains the metamorphosis of social anthropology into cultural anthropology in the process of its transplantation from Europe to North America.

The conceptual liquidation of Savage Other and the gradual disapproval of the notion of Black Other do not mean the conventional subject matter of anthropology has or will disappear; the Ethnographic Other has become the new focus.[3] The Ethnographic Other is a general and generalised Other and its specificity is based on culture/civilisation rather than on race. But the process of othering can and did continue and the Oriental Other[4] (which is an Other in other social/human sciences too) at the civilisational level emerged (see Said 1991).

The stigmatisation of the Orient was in tune with the inferiorisation of the Savage Other and Black Other, which in combination provided the justification for the civilising mission launched by the West. And western anthropology played a significant role in this context. The rise of sociology in the West was in sharp contrast to this. The initial mission of sociology was to study the modern industrial society of Europe. 'The emergence of industrial society is the prime concern of sociology', according to Ernest Gellner (1964: 35). Not only that, 'Sociology ... is the offspring of modernity and it bears the birthmark of modern parentage. Its mission is to understand the specificity of the modern world to which it belongs' (Heller 1987: 391). To complicate matters, as Zygmut Bauman observes,

> Sociology, as it came of age in the bosom of Western civilisation and as we know it today is endemically national-biased. It does not recognize a totality broader than a politically organised nation, the term 'society' as used by well-nigh all sociologists regardless of school loyalties, is, for all practical purpose, a name for an entity identical in size and composition with nation state (1973:42-43).

But both the 'modern' society of sociology and 'primitive' society of anthropology were 'invented'. As Adam Kuper puts it,

> ... modern society was defined above all by the territorial state, the monogamous family and private property. Primitive society therefore must have been nomadic, ordered by blood ties, sexually promiscuous and communist. [....] The ideal of primitive society therefore provided an idiom which was ideally suited for debate about modern society...primitive society as they imagined it inverted the characteristics of modern society as they saw it (1988: 5, 240).

Imaginations can and do crystallise independent of location. And the wide variety of dichotomous constructions in sociology and social/cultural anthropology are often the product of wild imaginations bereft of the authenticity of social reality which these disciplines were expected to be engaged in. An eloquent example of that is the age-old community-society dichotomy which has numerous incarnations. Community could be a structure, a sentiment, or merely a designated territory, and it is often juxtaposed with society in sociology. But as Robert A. Nisbet observes, 'Community begins as a moral value, only gradually does the secularisation of this concept become apparent in sociological thought in the nineteenth century' (1966: 18). Community which engaged anthropologists is all encompassing, a 'cradle to grave' arrangement to recall the tempting phrase introduced by Robert Redfield (1955). The secularised version of community is society, characterised by 'secondary contacts over wide geographical areas' and 'considerable mobility' according to S.P. Hays (1989: 12), the staple of sociologists.

However, the 'eclipse of the community' did not occur, the primary group was 're-discovered' in the industrial-urban setting and the tradition-modernity dichotomy was pronounced to be a misplaced polarity (Gusfield 1967). If so, the attributed estrangement between sociology and social anthropology in Europe seems to be the manifestation of academic vested interests. The intertwining between community and society is self-evident and one cannot be understood independent of the other. Pursuantly, sociology and social anthropology are inextricably bonded and they cannot be separated without harming each other. This became self-evident when these disciplines were transplanted outside Europe, to the analysis of which I will turn now. However, it is necessary to briefly advert to the implications of linking sociology with modernity and the nation-state at this juncture.

There are several implications of linking sociology with modernity and the nation state. I shall list two self-evident consequences of linking sociology and modernity here, deferring the discussion on linking sociology with the nation-state to a later point. One, the non-modern societies will not witness the birth and flowering of sociology; a privilege of modern societies. In this rendition the division of labour between sociology and social anthropology is immutable, the latter eternally consigned to the study of traditional societies, an inadmissible proposition. Two, logically, sociology should wither away as modernity recedes into the background; with the forging ahead of globality, sociology will meet with its inevitable demise. It should be emphasised here that the historical conjunctions which facilitated the birth of particular disciplines in specific locations need not repeat themselves. Different circumstances

do lead to the birth of particular branches of knowledge in different locations and then spread to other locations. The resilience of anthropology is an eloquent example of this phenomenon, it is alive and well in spite of the demise of colonialism. The continuous recasting of disciplines is an inevitable survival mechanism which is constantly happening.

II

The series of dichotomies — primitive/savage versus civilised, orient versus occident, traditional versus modern — receded into the background with the eclipse of colonialism and a trichotomy — First, Second, and Third World — emerged in their place with the onset of the Cold War. The conceptualisation of these three worlds determined the new division of labour among social scientists. The three worlds were conceived differently: the First World was purely and totally modern; Second World, technologically modern but politically non-modern; and the Third World is a world of tradition, irrationality, underdevelopment, over population, and political chaos. Project modernisation replaced the civilising mission of the colonial time and European social scientists changed their roles in this context. As political scientist C.E. Pletsch observes,

> One clan of social scientists is set apart to study the primitive societies of the Third World — anthropologists. Other clans — economists, sociologists and political scientists — study the Third World only insofar as the process of modernisation has begun. The true province of this latter social science is the modern world, especially ... the West. But again sub clans of each of these sciences of the modern world are specially outfitted to make forays into the ideological regions of the Second World (1981: 579).

This division of labour the First World social scientists assigned to themselves was not acceptable to the Second World. This was reflected in the speech A.I. Mikoyan of the Soviet Union delivered to the 20th International Congress of Orientalists in 1950. He said,

> ... the peoples of the Orient create themselves their own science, elaborate their own history, their own culture, their economy; in this way, the peoples of the Orient have been promoted from being objects (matter) of history to the rank of creators....The duty of the Orientalists in their work is to reflect objectively on the most important processes of the countries of Asia and Africa ... (quoted in Abdel-Malek 1963: 122).

The task assigned to the peoples of the Orient, (read the Third World) by the Second World to produce their own knowledge system unsettled the self-assigned monopoly of Europe in this context. To challenge the area studies regime launched by the First-World, the Second World too started producing knowledge about the Third World. The metamorphosis that occurred in the erstwhile colonies called for a new approach because they got differentiated into two: some parts of the New World – North America, Australia and New Zealand   got incorporated into the First World, and the other part of the New World Latin America – became part of the Third World. Because of its poor economic condition, Latin America could not launch a vigorous area studies programme; rather it became an area to be studied by First World scholars. Given this, the relevant unit for the present comparison is North America because of its material affluence and the rapid progress the region made in the social sciences.

While both North America and South Asia were erstwhile European colonies, they vary drastically with regard to the type of colonialism they were subjected to: North America had 'replicative' colonialism and South Asia had 'retreatist' colonialism (see Oommen 1991). The colonisers reproduce their society, polity, economy, and culture on the site of replicative colonialism because the local elements are weak and marginalised if not completely destroyed. In contrast, the colonisers retreat from colonies where they face stiff nationalist resistance and opposition. The local society and culture are largely retained, but economy and polity are superimposed. This produces a new amalgam of the local/national and alien/global. I suggest that the two situations differently impact on the transplantation of social sciences, here social anthropology and sociology. In spite of the dismantling of colonialism, the perception about the subject matter of social anthropology and socio-logy drastically varied between West Europe, North America, and South Asia. Social anthropology is defined as the study of primitive peoples (Lévi-Strauss 1966) and/or the study of other cultures (Beattie 1964) in Europe. In contrast, the North American sociologist Harold Fallding holds that 'cultural and social anthropology comprise neither more nor less than the sociology of simpler peoples. So I think one is entitled to claim all of it for sociology' (1968: 71). And, the South Asian social anthropologist M.N. Srinivas is equally forthright: '... the traditional but irrational distinction between sociology and social anthropology is so disastrous. A true science of society must include the study of all societies in space as well as time – primitive, modern and historical' (1966: 164).

However, North America retained the distinction between sociology and social anthropology, but it re-christened the latter as cultural anthropology, as noted above. Cultural anthropologists of North America studied the tribes, the First Nations, of their countries as well as peasants and tribes of the Third World, facilitated through the regime of Area Studies. In contrast, North American sociologists rarely studied tribes included in the Savage slot by their colleagues in cultural anthropology; they studied race-relations, that is, White-Black interactions without endorsing the notion of the Black Other. South Asian social anthropologists initially focused on the study of tribes but gradually started studying peasantry as well as urban centres. In contrast, it is rarely that sociologists of South Asia studied tribes, but certainly studied rural India and urban centres. These differing inclinations of social anthropologists and sociologists of South Asia indicate the persisting traditional influence of their respective disciplines on them.

We may recall here the distinction between tribal communities and peasant societies in social/cultural anthropology. Tribal communities are conceptualised as social structurally distinct and culturally autonomous entities. In contrast, peasant/folk society is a part-society constituting an important element in the wider civilisation which has both rural and pre-industrial urban elements (Foster 1953). The popular notion of rural-urban dichotomy, which was later re-christened as rural-urban continuum, in Europe could not be applied in North America and South Asia; the rural segment in these regions had peasantry as well as tribes, which are distinct. To capture this complexity it is necessary to postulate a trichotomy – tribe, peasant, and urban (for an example from South Asia, see Oommen 1967). This illustrates how the nature of empirical reality in specific locations calls for reformulation of concepts that have emerged elsewhere and shape the scope of particular disciplines.

How can one understand the differences in orientation of social/cultural anthropology in the three regions – West Europe, North America and South Asia? As J. Fabian notes '... nineteenth century anthropology sanctioned an ideological process by which relations between the West and its other, between anthropology and its object, were conceived not only as difference but as distance in space and time' (1983: 147). But the 'Savages' of North America, consisting of the pre-colonial inhabitants, became fellow nationals and co-citizens. Furthermore, in North America, anthropology is conceived as holistic and culture-centric. In contrast, sociology is society-centric and segmental in that the different societal dimensions are analysed ignoring the totality. The fact that North America's native Savages and imported Blacks were 'within people' studied by White anthropologists who are themselves 'outsiders' as

compared with European anthropologists who studied 'elsewhere people', has facilitated this process through a role-reversal (cf. Mintz 1998). There is an interesting trichotomy emerging here: the White American anthropologist, a cultural and racial outsider, studied the American Savage who is a cultural and racial insider as well as the African-American Black who is also a cultural and racial outsider. And yet all the three are legal insiders, that is, citizens of the same country. These factors facilitated an agreed academic division of labour between cultural anthropology and sociology *within* North America, and consequently their peaceful co-existence.

But, the relationship between social anthropology and sociology is hostile in Europe; in fact, European social anthropologists looked down upon sociology. Let me recall the articulations of two prominent European social anthropologists. Louis Dumont asserts: 'Sociological understanding is more advanced by social anthropologists looking upon a foreign society than by the sociologist looking at his own (1966: 23). And J.A. Barnes:

> The ethnographer, with his traditional distrust of direct questions and questionnaires, and his desire to do more than test a bald hypothesis or establish a correlation, is particularly well qualified to observe ... lengthy and devious sequences of social action and to analyze them in sociological terms (1959: 15).

Thus, the superiority of social anthropology as a discipline that studied elsewhere peoples through participant observation is articulated aloud. In fact, the North American sociologist Homans testifies to the stigmatisation of sociology by British social anthropologists (1962: 113-19).

The situation in South Asia is also drastically different from that of West Europe; as in North America, the South Asian social anthropologists too study fellow citizens and co-nationals. But on two counts, however, the situation in South Asia and North America differ. One, in North America the indigenous population has dwindled substantially in the last 500 years and at present they constitute a mere one per cent of the national population in the United States of America. Of this 50 per cent are in reservations, areas recognised as their exclusive habitats and the other half are dispersed, marginalised and impoverished (Jarvenpa 1985). The condition of the indigenous peoples in Canada is equally dismal (see Roosens 1989).

The situation of India's indigenous people[5] is in stark contrast to this; they are cultural and legal insiders like the Indian anthropologists who studied them. The 461 Scheduled Tribes of India constitute 8 per cent

(that is, over 80 million) of the national population and majority of them live in their ancestral homelands. In fact, 70 per cent of them live in two enclaves in Central India and Northeast India and, of the 34 provincial states of India, the tribal population is in majority in five wherein their political clout is evident (see Oommen 1989, for a comparison between the indigenous peoples of India and the United States of America). This is to say, if the traditional object of study of anthropology is an endangered species in North America, in South Asia, particularly in India, it is alive and well. This has serious political implications for the practice of anthropology. If in North America the anthropologist often takes on an advocacy role and pleads for the protection of human rights of the indigenous peoples, in South Asia the anthropologist is invariably inclined to plead for the protection of citizenship entitlements of the tribal population.

The second difference between North America and South Asia in this respect is also important for the practice of anthropology. While the cultural specificities of the indigenous peoples of North America are recognised, there is no evident enthusiasm to assimilate or integrate them into the national mainstream. In contrast, there are at least three distinct views regarding the relationship between the tribal and non-tribal peoples of India. If Verrier Elwin (1957), the British missionary-turned-anthropologist, advocated preservation of the cultural integrity of India's tribes, the Indian anthropologist D.N. Majumdar (1939) preferred cautious acculturation through mutual borrowing of cultural elements between tribes and non-tribes of India. In contrast, according to the Indian 'sociologist' G.S. Ghurye (1932, 1943), the tribes of India are but backward Hindus and the entire Indian population is gradually evolving into a single 'Indian race'. Indian Anthropologist B.S. Guha (1951) too attested the unity of the 'Indian race', but advocated a cautious approach. He wrote,

> The essential thing is to realize that the tribal and general population are inhabitants of the same country and their interests are closely interwoven for good or bad.... The administration of primitive tribes should be so planned that the purpose is served by developing them as their own models and thought, but also gradually bringing them up as full and integral members of the country and participating like the rest in her joys and sorrows (Guha 1951: 44).

These differing approaches to tribes in North America and South Asia are bound to affect the discipline of social/cultural anthropology and pursuantly the discipline of sociology in these regions. In West

Europe the object of social anthropological analysis is a distinct and distant 'Other'; but the subject matter of sociology is the similar and proximate fellow nationals and co-citizens. In North America too the indigenous peoples who constitute the object of study in cultural anthropology are distinct in cultural terms and distant on the evolutionary scale but proximate in space; they are fellow countrymen and co-citizens. As for the North American sociologist, the object of study is fellow citizens but drawn from a wide variety of ethnic groups and cultural contexts. In the case of South Asia, the impulse for integrating the tribal peoples, either through complete assimilation or through selective acculturation, into the national mainstream is strong and persisting. Consequently there is considerable overlap between the disciplines of sociology and social anthropology.[6]

Instead of recognising the historical circumstances that led to the spread of anthropology and sociology, both of which originated in Europe, and the metamorphosis they have undergone in the process of transplanting to different locations, some writers tend to stigmatise the discipline of anthropology. I shall recall a sample of these articulations because they have negative implications for the practice of the discipline outside Europe. Kathleen Gough (1968), who taught anthropology in North America and did field work in South Asia, famously remarked that anthropology is a 'child of Western imperialism'. Similarly, G.D. Berreman (1968), who also taught anthropology in North America and did field work in South Asia, was concerned about using results of anthropological research against the people who were studied. West European anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) conceded that knowledge produced by anthropology legitimised colonial regimes.

A number of non-Europeans too hold negative perceptions about anthropology. While most of them refer to 'academic colonialism' of the West (read West Europe and North America) in general, a few have specifically referred to anthropology. For example, Talal Asad (1973) sees anthropology as a product of unequal encounter between the dominant West and the dominated Third World. And, the Sri Lankan social scientist Susantha Goonatilake (2001) has characterised anthropology in his country as 'a Eurocentric misadventure'. Whether one accepts or rejects these views, they have serious implications for the discipline of anthropology. In labelling anthropology as an instrument of domination by the West over the rest, anthropology's academic legitimacy erodes in the non-West.

Generally speaking, sociology is not subjected to such stigmatisation as it is firmly anchored on the nation-state. But an unanticipated consequence of this is that sociology has become utterly state-centric.

And, thanks to the conflation between state and nation, 'national sociologies' emerge and disappear with the rise and fall of sovereign states. In a book entitled *National Traditions in Sociology* published in 1989, there are two separate chapters on the 'national' traditions of West Germany and East Germany. If the book had been published after the fall of the Berlin Wall, there would have been only one national tradition in German Sociology! In the same book there is but one chapter on the national tradition of Soviet Union (see Genov 1989). Had the book been published after the dismantling of the Soviet Union, there could have been as many national traditions as successor sovereign states. Similarly, if the Indian subcontinent had not been partitioned there would have been only one Indian sociology; now we have three 'national' socio-logies – Bangladeshi, Indian, and Pakistani – in the region. This means for every sovereign state there is a 'national' sociology!

There are several implications of this. Let me note just three of them. One, those nations which did not succeed in creating their own sovereign states will not have their sociologies, there is a French Sociology but no sociology of Brittany; there is a Spanish sociology, but no Catalan sociology; there is a British sociology, but no Welsh sociology. The South Asian situation is more intriguing. Indian sociology encapsulates within it Bengali, Punjabi, Tamil, and several other sociologies none of which is conceded autonomy. To complicate matters, the sociology of Punjab is apportioned between India and Pakistan; that of Bengal, between India and Bangladesh; and Tamil sociology, between India and Sri Lanka. This is to say, the integrity of sociology as a discipline is mutilated because of its inextricable intertwining with the state, a western trap.

Two, to link sociology with nation-state is against the very grain of the discipline. The primary mission of sociology is to study the wide variety of social structures and cultural patterns. That is, sociology has a disciplinary vested interest in diversity, both social and cultural, which it shares with nations. In contrast, the western nation-states relentlessly pursued the goal of creating homogeneous societies. It is an unfortunate paradox that, in spite of their similarity in orientation to cultural diversity, sociology and nation are chained together to an institution, the nation-state, which pursues a goal inimical to their interests. For an authentic flowering of sociology, its co-terminality with the nation-state should be dismantled.

Three, sociology gets linked with the pathologies of state-sponsored nationalism, the three important manifestations of which are racism, religious fundamentalism, and linguistic chauvinism. And wherever sociology falls into the shadow of pathological versions of nationalism, it

loses its humanistic value orientation. The way out for sociology is to consciously pursue emancipatory nationalism anchored to secularism, democracy, and humanism. For this, sociology should distance itself from the state and acquire and retain its autonomy, a task largely achieved by West European anthropology in the post-colonial era.

Traditionally, European anthropologists studied 'stateless societies', which is actually a conceptual nullity because no society ever existed without an authority system be it a tribal chieftain, council of elders, monarchy, democracy, and the like. But A.R. Radcliffe-Brown wrote in 1940,

> The state in this sense (that is having sovereignty and its own will) does not exist in the phenomenal world; it is a fiction of the philosophers. What does exist is an organisation, that is, a collection of individual human beings connected by a common system of relations.... There is no such thing as the power of the state ...' (1955/1940: xiii).

Whether the state is an empirical reality or not may be debatable but the government is, and the anthropologist needs to keep this in mind while studying societies. I am not arguing that western anthropologists always kept analytical distance from the state, but suggesting that in so far as 'the power of the state' is not recognised as an empirical reality, it is not under the pale of their analyses. The relevant point here is, this is in contrast to sociology whose link with the institution of the nation state is explicit.

III

I have suggested that due to the passage from colonialism to Cold War and their attendant goals of civilising mission and modernisation respectively, the disciplines of anthropology and sociology too are undergoing changes. With the disappearance of the tripartite division of the world – First, Second, and Third – and the emergence of the 'Global Age', the world has come to be perceived as one. The national sociologies are believed to be disappearing and the new refrain is 'global sociology'. This was clearly articulated in the XII World Congress of sociology held in 1990, the theme of which was 'Sociology for One World: Unity and Diversity'. This theme is in tune with the conceptualisation of globalisation, which '... refers to all those processes by which the people of the world are incorporated into a single world society, global society.' (Albrow 1990: 9). Not only that, globalisation is charac-

terised by the '… intensification of world-wide social relations which link distant localities …' (Giddens 1990: 64). Capturing this emerging perception, Margaret Archer pleaded for a new disciplinary status and role for sociology in her presidential address to the XII World Congress of Sociology:

> I want to advocate a single sociology, whose ultimate unity rests on acknowledging the universality of human reasoning, to endorse a single world, whose oneness is based on adopting a realistic ontology; and to predicate any services this Discipline can give to this world upon accepting the fundamental unicity of Humanity (1991: 131).

Three main reasons prompted Archer to advocate a single global sociology. First, with the demise of positivism, sociology has become 'increasingly localised'. Second, the current celebration of diversity, tradition, locality and indigenisation are occurring through a retreat from 'international endeavours'. Third, the emergence of 'false universalism' such as (a) modernisation theory, which lays down a common teleological track for all societies, (b) dependency theory, which divides the world into the core and peripheries with the ultimate objective of 'modernising' the latter, and (c) post-modernism, which is in effect a repudiation of modernity (*ibid.*: 132-35).

The domain assumptions to which Archer latches her argument are, however, questionable. First, it is true that positivism has been closely interrogated and its excesses have been largely exorcised. However, it is not true that positivism is dead. In fact, even those methodological orientations, which arose as alternatives to positivism, do retain certain aspects of it. Second, international endeavours and localised enterprises are not necessarily mutually exclusive; they co-exist and complement. Third, the idea of multiple modernities is widely endorsed now and, therefore, modernisation becomes a false universalism only when it is equated with westernisation. Finally, the juxtaposing of the universal (one world) with the many traditional worlds smacks of western epistemological dualism. Therefore, to build an authentic sociology it is necessary to incorporate the experiences of many worlds.

I have contested Archer's argument in my presidential address to the XIII World Congress of Sociology[7] held in 1994 and suggested that,

> … a world society discerned in terms of one culture, one civilisation, one communication system and the like is not only not possible but not even desirable. It is not possible because world society is an aggregation of state-societies, the effective units of operation. Specificities of particular societies and civilisations emanate from geography, history, culture,

political arrangements or level of economic development. That is, pluralisation encapsulates the very conception of world society (Oommen 1995: 266).

In social/cultural anthropology such contestations are rare, if any, the concern being the spread of culture and lifestyles which manifest not only in homogenisation but also in pluralisation, traditionalisation, and hybridisation thereby recognising cultural diversity as an essential aspect of the ongoing process of globalisation (see Oommen 2005). This is *not* in consonance with the conventional idea of recognising cultural specificities of communities by anthropologists. And, globalisation of cultural diversities give rise to global cultural flows conditioned by ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes which rendered the world social reality fluid according to Arjun Appadurai (1997: 27-47). That is, the tranquillity of the cultural world is disturbed by global cultural flows.

However, two points need to be noted here. One, the vast majority of human population does not experience any spatial mobility in spite of globalisation. But, thanks to satellite communication, they are constantly exposed to alien influences at their own locations. Two, the turbulence of migration started in the 16th century with geographical discoveries and colonialism that followed it. Although forty to fifty million migrants left Europe between 1846 and 1924, 90 per cent of them went to the Americas. Furthermore, twelve million enslaved Africans were brought to the same region between 17th to 19th centuries (see Trouillot 2003: 30-31). These developments are prompting social/cultural anthropology to abandon the traditional notions of highly localised, boundary-maintaining, holistic, primordialist images of cultural form and substance as is evident from the works published in the 1980s and since (see, for example, Marcus and Fischer 1986: 66-75; Thornton 1988; Hannerz 1989). This is to say that anthropology as a discipline anchored on territoriality – the non-West, East, South, Third World, or specific pockets within them – has disappeared.

The turbulence of large-scale migration which started during the colonial period continues and its impact has affected the disciplines of anthropology and sociology, albeit in different ways. During the colonial period Europeans migrated in large numbers to the New World – Americas, Australia, and New Zealand – and settled down, but the number of European migrants to South Asia, for example, was limited in spite of colonisation of the region. On the other hand, large numbers of indentured labour were taken to several destinations from South Asia creating a new system of slavery (Tinker 1974). South Asian

anthropologists and sociologists have studied for the first time their countrymen located outside their countries leading to the emergence of a new specialisation; studies in diaspora provided graphic accounts of South Asian migrants settled away from their homelands.

With the eclipse of colonialism and the coming of post-colonial states the patterns of migration changed drastically. The new immigrants from South Asia went to West-Europe and North America for higher studies, particularly in the fields of science and technology. The hope at that time was that they will return and contribute to the 'nation-building', process. But most of them did not and the talk about 'brain drain' became common by the 1970s and 1980s. The 'brain drain' spurred a large number of studies in sociology and anthropology and UNESCO sponsored some of them (see, for example, Atal and Oglio 1987).

Those who stayed back and worked in metropolitan countries after obtaining training were dubbed as anti-national and unpatriotic during the Cold War era but they are hailed as trail blazers in the emerging Global Age; those who were accused of causing brain drain are getting enlisted in the 'brain pool' of the world. The implications of the changing compositions of immigrants and attitudes towards them, for sociology and social/cultural anthropology, need to be noted here. First, the old practice of West European and North American scholars studying 'elsewhere' peoples and cultures is persisting, but shrinking fast. Second, the South Asian sociologists and social anthropologists are studying their own people located away from their homelands and this is assuming increased importance. Third, South Asian sociologists and anthropologists who have become citizens or residents of the countries in West Europe and North America study not only their ancestral homelands but also the societies in which they live and work. Fourth, a formidable fund of knowledge is being created by the 'the scholars in Diaspora' who often look at the social reality they study wearing a different lens. Finally, the emergence of multi-sited field research prompts the same researcher to traverse different field areas as against the conventional single field site (Marcus 1995). These developments are bound to change irreversibly the old conceptions such as 'the Other', the distinction between the emic and etic perspectives, centrality of participant observation as *the* method, and consequently the conventional distinction between sociology and social/cultural anthropology persisting in Europe.

Notes

1. Although the focus of this paper is on sociology and social anthropology, in its origin and spread, anthropology as a whole consisting of physical anthropology, ethno-

graphy, ethnology, and pre-historic archaeology were bound together. Therefore, anthropology and social anthropology are referred to interchangeably in this paper.

2. Although both North America and South Asia were largely British colonies (with the exceptions of Quebec in Canada or Pondicherry [now Puducherry] and Goa in South Asia) the types of colonialism they experienced drastically varied, which, in turn, moulded sociology and anthropology in these post-colonial spaces. This indicates the importance of locations to which they were transplanted.

3. It is not suggested that the focus of anthropology shifted successively from the Savage Other to the Black Other to the Ethnographic Other. But the centrality of one Other over another Other shifted gradually for the reasons indicated.

4. Although Said imagines the whole of Orient in the singular, I have suggested elsewhere that there are at least three possible Orients each of which could be viewed with different attitudes and orientations by the West. The Near Orient, broadly the Egyptian civilisational region, was geographically the most proximate and predominantly populated by one of the peoples of the Book – the Muslims – and yet an object of stigmatisation because of the prevalence of slavery and oppression of women. The Far Orient, the area of Chinese civilisational region, was geographically and mentally distant from Europe and yet the object of admiration for its technology, bureaucracy, and religion. The attitude towards the Middle Orient – the Indian civilisational region – was mixed: it was admired for its ancient civilisation, Sanskrit language, and Aryan connections, but despised for the caste system and oppression of women (see Oommen 2005: 160).

5. The preferred self-labelling by the tribes of India is *adivasis* (early settlers), but this unsettles the view that India was the original ancestral homeland of Aryan Hindus. Understandably, those Hindus who pursue the idea of creating a Hindu nation in India contest this claim. The Indian state and some anthropologists/sociologists too are averse to this claim by the 'tribal' population.

6. This overlap is taken cognisance of and the close collaboration of social anthropology with sociology is advocated. The rationale for this is articulated thus: '… in a country such as India which includes nearly 30 million tribal people, 60 million Scheduled Castes and nearly 160 million Other Backward Classes, sociology has to be taught in close association with social anthropology' (Srinivas *et al.* 1966: 26). This view endorses social anthropology's conventional interest in studying the underprivileged Other.

7. The XIII World Congress of Sociology was held in 1994 in Belfield, Germany; its theme was 'Contested Boundaries and Emerging Solidarities'.

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Social Capital and Entrepreneurship:
An Analysis of Methodological Issues

Anirban Sengupta

Entrepreneurship is one of the fields where the concept of social capital has found application as an analytical tool. However, considerable gaps exist in operationalisation and measurement of this concept. Using the data collected from Indian entrepreneurs in Information and Communication Technology industry, this paper addresses some of these gaps. Three forms of social capital, namely, support, reference, and goodwill can be used as indicators for measurement of social capital. Introduction of these indicators also increases the feasibility of measuring social capital by use of interval scale.

[Keywords: entrepreneurship; Information and Communication Technology (ICT) industry; methodology; social capital; social network]

Social capital, being a sensitising concept, has found application in different areas of study like regional development, organisation, and entrepreneurship. Depending on the context, researchers' understanding about the role of social capital has varie d distinctly. With regard to regional development or organisation, researchers have examined the role of social capital in bringing cohesion and/or collaboration within a group or across groups. With reference to entrepreneurship, researchers have attempted to explore the role of social capital in facilitating an entrepreneur's effort in securing individual advantages.

Variation of contexts also influences the operationalisation of social capital – its components, indicators, and the tools of measurement. Although the broad understanding of social capital remains the same, the indicators for measurement vary considerably. What is social capital in one context may not necessarily be so in another. For example, newspaper readership or membership of voluntary associations, which may be considered as indicators for social capital in the context of regional

development (see Putnam 1994), would be of little or no relevance while attempting to understand development of entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is challenging to operationalise social capital, particularly if one wishes to measure it with quantitative data.

Quantification of social capital becomes particularly important for the purpose of comparing its significance across multiple situations. Attempts to measure social capital using interval scale has met relatively more success in the context of regional development and organisation than in the field of entrepreneurship. This paper seeks to fill the gap that exists in identification of appropriate indicators for measuring social capital for entrepreneurs using quantitative data. For this purpose, the paper depends upon primary data collected from Indian entrepreneurs operating in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) industry (Sengupta 2009).

Social Capital

In recent years, many researchers have engaged themselves in understanding the conceptual framework of 'social capital' (see Woolcock 1998; Woolcock and Narayan 2000; Westlund and Bolton 2003; Li 2007). However, initial discussions about social capital began quite early. James Coleman credits G. Loury with offering the first definition of the term 'social capital'. According to Loury, social capital implies 'the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organisation and that are useful for the cognitive or social development of a child or young person' (Coleman 1994: 300).

Since Loury, the definition of social capital has experienced considerable elaboration by different theorists. Often social capital involves the intangible assets residing in social networks. It is generated through mutual obligations, expectations, and norms among members of social networks (Frazier and Niehm 2004). As a concept, social capital looks into the functional aspects of various social structural components, and thereby facilitates analysis of individual action by establishing a relationship between the structure and the agency. However, remaining within this broad framework, the definition of social capital offered by different theorists has differed significantly.

The central premise of one of the schemes of conceptualisations is that social capital is investment in social relations with an expectation of securing returns in the market (Lin 2003). From this standpoint, social network or social ties is considered quite critical for understanding social capital. M.S. Granovetter (1973), one of the early contributors to the discussion on social networks, categorised ties depending on their

strength. Here strength is determined by the amount of time spent in maintaining a tie, emotional intensity of a relationship, and reciprocal services. According to him, whereas strong ties can be a source of support, weak ties may offer access to various external resources.

R.S. Burt (1992) conceptualises social capital as relationship with other players in a competitive arena of work. These players include friends, colleagues, and more general contacts through whom one receives opportunities to use one's own financial and human capital. Opportunities here include job promotions, participation in significant projects, influential access to important decisions, and so on. Considering the fact that competition is never perfect, social capital plays an important role in deciding who gets the opportunity. Social capital concerns the rate of return in the market production equation.

Pierre Bourdieu (1997) has also attempted to understand social capital from the point of view of its resource potential. He defines social capital as

> the aggregate of the actual or potential resources, which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in various senses of the word (*ibid.:* 51).

According to Bourdieu, social capital, in the form of networks, is essentially related to the cultural and financial capital possessed by other people in the network. He says that value of any capital lies in its convertibility. Social capital becomes valuable because it offers access to other forms of capital (*ibid.*).

James S. Coleman (1988) has also defined the term 'social capital' by reference to its function. According to him, social capital is not a single entity; it is rather a conglomeration of diverse entities, which are composed of some dimensions of social structures, and which facilitate various actions of actors. Unlike other forms of capital, social capital lies in the structure of relations among actors. Social capital is jointly owned by parties to a relationship (Burt 2000). No one player has exclusive ownership rights to social capital; it is a communal property (Cooke and Wills 1999).

Credit for generating a widespread discussion among academicians and practitioners on social capital as a conceptual tool, particularly in the context of regional development, is often attributed to Robert Putnam's book titled *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*

(1994). Putnam defines social capital as 'features of social organisation, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (*ibid.:* 167).

Supply of social capital increases rather than decreases through use and it becomes depleted if not used. Unlike other forms of capital, social capital is produced as a by-product of social activities emerging out of diverse spheres like religion, tradition, and shared historical experience (Fukuyama 2000). 'Social capital is an instantiated informal norm that promotes co-operation between two or more individuals' (*ibid.:* 3). Such norms can vary from reciprocity between two friends to complex and elaborately articulated religious doctrines (*ibid.*). Partha Dasgupta (2003) has considered social capital as identical with interpersonal network. Like Coleman, he avers that there is no single object called social capital; it is rather a multitude of bits that may together be called social capital. Each bit reflects a set of interpersonal connections.

While talking about social capital as resources embedded in relationships, R.S. Burt (1992) brings in the concept of 'structural hole' to explain the separation between non-redundant contacts. Here, non-redundancy is significant with reference to resource value. For him,

> Non-redundant contacts are connected by a structural hole. A structural hole is a relationship of non-redundancy between two contacts... Non-redundant contacts are disconnected in some way – either directly, in the sense that they have no direct contact with one another, or indirectly, in the sense that one has contacts that exclude the others. The respective empirical conditions that indicate a structural hole are cohesion and structural equivalence... Under the cohesion criterion, two contacts are redundant to the extent that they are connected by a strong relationship. A strong relationship indicates the absence of a structural hole... Two people are structurally equivalent to the extent that they have the same contacts. Regardless of the relation between structurally equivalent people, they lead to the same sources of information and so are redundant. Cohesion concerns direct connection; structural equivalence concerns indirect connection by mutual contact (*ibid.:* 18-19).

Structural holes are beneficial not only in terms of their resource potential, but also in terms of the opportunity they create in exercising control by utilising information gap (*ibid.*). However, this argument may be questioned empirically. For example, the typical collectivistic culture of China dampens the control effects of structural holes. Similarly, in organisations that foster a clan-like high-commitment culture, a culture that emphasises mutual investment between people, the control benefits of structural holes are dissonant with the dominant spirit of co-operation.

Information benefits of structural holes cannot materialise due to the communal sharing values in such organisations (Xiao and Tsui 2007).

An important debate has evolved around the relationship between social capital and trust. According to Putnam (1994), trust is an inseparable part of social capital. It promotes co-operation and vice versa. For him, trust is a component of social capital; social capital emerges out of civic engagements and not trust. Whereas, a completely reverse argument has been advocated by Dasgupta (2003), who states that social capital is just a component of trust formation. According to him, trust can be developed in different ways; interpersonal network is only one among them. It is not always necessary to know people personally to develop a relationship of trust. F. Fukuyama (1996) also gives a superior status to trust. According to him, trust has to exist in order for social capital to develop.

In the light of the above discussion, 'social capital' may provisionally be conceptualised as social networks that have resource potential. Social networks here would imply more or less institutionalised social relationships. Such a definition of social capital is surely inadequate for variety of reasons, for example, it does not explicate what kind of resources social capital consists of. However, improvement in this definition requires empirical data. It is evident that each institutionalised social relationships gives rise to unique resources, which may be used for purposes other than maintenance of social structure. This is primarily observable in the pattern of such social relationship, that is, in the nature of expectations and obligations among the members of such social networks.

Social Capital and Entrepreneurship

Social capital could be identified in different contexts, and is often associated with strongly integrated communities. However, not all strongly integrated communities generate social capital which may be relevant for entrepreneurship development (Cooke and Wills 1999). In the context of entrepreneurship, social capital is utilised for various purposes including acquiring customers, attracting employees, building reputation, and discussing the ways of solving business problems (Anderson and Jack 2002). Broadly, the benefits of social capital are of two kinds: (i) access to information and (ii) ability to control. Personal contacts get significant information to an individual before others receive it. It can also function as referral for future opportunities (Burt 2000).

There are primarily two ways in which one may understand influence of social capital in accessing various resources. First, rational

choice perspective views social capital as a basic resource, which individuals may use only for their self-interested ends. And second, there exists the concept of social embeddedness, which also connotes individual freedom of action, but at the same time implies some form of reciprocity or mutuality. In embedded contexts, entrepreneurial agency would be shaped or nudged in different directions because of social obligations, expectations, trustworthiness, values, norms, and effective sanctions (Anderson and Jack 2002).

There are many ways in which social capital may influence economic action (Lin 2003; Khan 2006; Meccheri and Pelloni 2006). One among them is scope for the reduction of transaction costs associated with administrative procedures (Knack and Keefer 1997). This is because achieving a coordinated action among a group of people possessing no social capital implies additional investment for monitoring, negotiation, litigation, and enforcement of formal agreements. Preparing a contract keeping in mind every contingency that may arise in future would become an expensive affair, and, naturally, it would be inflexible and costly to enforce (Fukuyama 2000). Informal enforcement, involving a loss of reputation and future access to the market for any party that defaults on a contract, may often be a better alternative (MacLeod 2007).

Similarly, business processes function well if knowledge is trusted (Fukuyama 2000; Ojha 2002). In an emerging economy, entrepreneurs often consider it essential to trust employees, suppliers, and customers. Trust is considered as useful for facilitating learning, reducing uncertainty, and thereby increasing efficiency and effectiveness (Neace 1999; Saxenian 2000). Interpersonal trust is critical because competition is always imperfect. Had competition been perfect, one need not have depended on interpersonal trust; one could trust the system instead.

Generally, new ventures lack access to essential resources like established products, longstanding customer relations, experienced managerial teams, sufficient capital, and strong reputation (Zhao and Aram 1995). Social capital, particularly in the form of social network, may emerge as an important channel for accessing these resources (Svendsen and Svendsen 2004; Hung 2006; Ramachandran and Ray 2006). In biotechnology start-ups, network formation and industry growth are significantly influenced by the development and maintenance of social capital. Firms that are structurally more constrained co-operate with partners who can be firmly embedded in the historical network structure. Enduring inter-firm ties sustain the structure that facilitates new co-operation (Walker *et al.* 1997).

Social capital may perform an important role in offering access to information and know-how that entrepreneurs do not have, but definitely need for better pricing, superior delivery, innovative merchandising, and accessing new products (Cooke and Wills 1999; Tötterman and Sten 2005). However, the nature of information exchange and the frequency of exchange would depend on trust, commitment, reciprocal intention, and shared expectation present in the network, that is, upon the strength of ties. Dense relationships with kin, close friends, employees, and customers may provide information, encouragement (or motivation) and necessary support required for initiating new business ventures. They may also provide information about customer attitudes, competitor activities, business concerns, and about financial matters. On the other hand, sparse weak ties with business acquaintances, suppliers, business associates, industry contacts, and local government may provide information that serves as fuel for innovation and renewal of business strategies. Besides, they may also provide information about industry trends and market. Whereas strong ties in social network facilitate access to information that is not codified, is complex, or is rapidly changing, weak ties are often useful in tapping information about broader market and macro-environment. Access to unique information about customer needs and wants, or product availability can result in a competitive advantage over less-informed competitors (Frazier and Niehm 2004).

However, there is growing empirical evidence that social embeddedness has negative consequences. Tightly controlled relationships reinforce social obligations and expectations that may limit the freedom of economic agents to recognise and exploit new opportunities. Previously instrumental relationships may turn into 'dark resources' or social liabilities that constrain rent-seeking activities of managers and entrepreneurs, affecting negatively their performance indicators (Batjargal 2003). Despite their usefulness, personal relationships may have drawbacks in managing inter-firm alliances. For example, strong interpersonal ties in alliances can sometimes prevent dissolution of faltering arrangements, as feelings of affection may prevent the making of difficult, yet prudent, termination decisions (Adobor 2006). Excessive trust may as well have various negative consequences (see Goel and Karri 2006; Zahra *et al.* 2006).

Social capital, conceptualised as connections, may not be sufficient for accessing various resources. For example, in cosmetics and high technology industry in the United States,

> while entrepreneur's *social capital* (as based on their reputation, social
> network, etc.) often helps them gain access to persons important for their

success (for example, venture capitalists, potential customers), their *social competence* then plays a key role in determining the outcomes they experience (for example, whether they obtain financing, attract key employees, etc.) (Baron and Markman 2003: 42).

Here, *social competence* includes skills like accuracy in perceiving others, skill at impression management, persuasiveness, etc.

Although researchers have been quite successful in conceptualising the relationship between social capital and entrepreneurship, developing a technique for measuring social capital in the context of entrepreneurship by identifying appropriate indicators has not been easy. In comparison, scholars have been more successful in locating indicators of social capital in other contexts like development and organisation. The next section would focus on exploring the different ways in which attempts have been made to measure social capital in the context of entrepreneurship and assess the validity of such measurements.

Indicators for Measuring Social Capital

Given that social capital is conceptualised differently in different contexts, indicators which have been used for measuring social capital has varied considerably. With reference to entrepreneurship, social capital is mainly understood through social networks. Indicators of such networks may include range (the number of external relationships to obtain resources), frequency of contact (with kin, friends, suppliers, business associates, industry contacts, and local government), intimacy, friendship, value sharing, and moral obligation (towards kin and friends), trust (kin, friends, customers, employees, local residents, and local business owners), commitment (towards customers, employees, local residents, and local business owners), reputation (among customers, employees, local residents, business associates, non-competing business-men in other localities, suppliers, industry contacts, and local government), longevity of social network (with customers, employees, local residents, suppliers, business associates, industry contacts, and local government), reciprocal relationship (with customers, employees, local residents, suppliers, business associates, industry contacts, and local government), goal-sharing (with local business owners), and infrequent contact (with business associates, and non-competing businessmen in other geographical localities) (Zhao and Aram 1995; Frazier and Niehm 2004; Tötterman and Sten 2005; Rindova *et al.* 2007).

In addition, social capital in the context of entrepreneurship may be measured by exploring indicators like having parents or friends who

owned businesses, membership of business networks, having experience as a member of a start-up team (Davidsson and Honig 2003), frequency of church attendance, and marital status of the entrepreneur (Honig 1998). With reference to entrepreneurship among immigrant ethnic community, measurement of social capital requires certain specific indicators. These include the extent of retention of ethnic identity (absent/intermediate/strong), residence patterns (dispersed/intermediate/ enclave), frequency of social events (absent/infrequent/frequent), retention of native language (assimilation/intermediate/strong), dependence on group assistance (independent/intermediate/interdependent), self-sacrifice for group success (none/intermediate/high), role differentiation based on sex (absent/intermediate/strong), class hierarchies (differential access to power roles) (absent/weak/intermediate/strong), resistance to acculturation (open/implicit/rigid), conflict resolution mechanism (absent/intermediate/strong), inheritance distribution (equal/intermediate/unequal), and endogamous marriage (open/intermediate/rigid) (Caulkins and Peters 2002).

How valid are indicators that have been used so far for measuring entrepreneurial social capital? Logically, it appears doubtful that we can infer about an entrepreneur's social capital by measuring the number of people known to her/him, the frequency of communication with those acquaintances, the length of previous conversation with them, and the duration of familiarity. To take an example, for securing financing, it may be more useful to know one influential person in the investor community than to know a large number of unrelated people. This is not to say that knowing more people would never amplify an individual's social capital. It may, but it would not invariably do so. This means that context would play a significant role in deciding the indicators of social capital.

Keeping the importance of context in mind it would be worthwhile exploring the possibility of identifying indicators for measuring entrepreneurial social capital that may be relevant in multiple contexts. It is also necessary to make an attempt to resolve the debate that exists between emphases on quality as opposed to quantity regarding measurement of entrepreneurial social capital. Utilisation of empirical data would be necessary for addressing these concerns. The next section would discuss the nature of empirical data collected for this purpose and the methodology adopted for collection and analysis of data (Sengupta 2009).

For the purpose of the current study we decided to interact with entrepreneurs in ICT industry. Primary data for the current study was collected from four cities in India where many ICT enterprises are

located, namely, Bengaluru (Bangalore), Chennai, Mumbai, and Pune. Considering the interest in addressing certain conceptual gaps in a specific empirical context, grounded theory (see Glaser and Strauss 1970) appeared to be the most suitable methodology for the current research. Keeping this methodology in mind, theoretical sampling technique was utilised for identifying thirty entrepreneurs. Data for the present study was collected through the method of case study supported by in-depth interview of the entrepreneurs. Data was qualitative in nature and was processed by generating relevant thematic codes. In order to improve the quality of data, confidentiality was maintained and pseudonyms were created for all the names available in the data. All the names used in this paper are pseudonyms.

Social Capital: A Re-look at the Concept

Like Bourdieu (1997), we found that value of social capital emerges from its convertibility. Social capital is primarily valuable as it is an intermediary for securing diverse resources. There are a variety of purposes related to business for which an entrepreneur in the ICT industry utilises her/his relationship with significant others. These purposes include identification of business opportunity, locating prospective customers, getting customers, retaining customers, and securing financial investment and infrastructural support.

All the relationships which the entrepreneurs utilised for business often generated out of informal relationships maintained by them. Some of these informal relationships emerged out of an entrepreneur's professional life, whereas some others developed from her/his personal life, within family or outside. For example, Alok Dutta, founder of Silicon Networks Pvt. Ltd., an enterprise in semiconductor industry, used his father's relationship for getting an angel investor:

> ... my Dad was able to introduce me to another gentleman of his generation.... [That gentleman] had a group ... who had the funding. They asked me how much I need [from them] and so that's how we started.

Unlike Alok Dutta, Innovative Web Solutions Pvt. Ltd. founder Gautam Apte utilised the relationships which he had built up during his professional career as an employee in the USA:

> I started tapping my network and informing [various people I know about] ... what I have [got] to deliver.... I approached the president of the last company that I worked for. He was an American.... And because of my

professional record in that company he said hey, *I have seen you perform in our previous company. As long as its you [who is] handling it I don't have an issue working with you....* So that's how I started.

Based on these observations we support the argument that social capital lies in the structure of relations among actors (see Coleman 1988; Burt 2000). At the same time, our findings endorse existing viewpoints (see Fukuyama 2000; Anderson and Jack 2002) that social capital is produced as a by-product of other social activities. However, we differ from F. Fukuyama (*ibid.*) in terms of nature of such social activities. Whereas, in the context explored by Fukuyama (*ibid.*), such social activities emerged out of religion, tradition, and shared historical experience, none of these was important for us. Instead, activities developing out of work, education, family life, friendship, and expression of diasporic sentiments evolved as important here. For instance, Naresh Ponnaiah of Sunshine Technologies Ltd. said,

> ... once we had the [business] idea, we wanted some early first customers. *So we went to a friend of ours who is the MD of a very big company....* He is founder of that company.... So I said we have this product and we think this can solve this particular problem for your company. And we want an opportunity to use this product to solve that problem for your company ... next day he gave us an order saying that go ahead and do it and this is my first contribution.... [Getting the first customer,] I think, is primarily again a matter of trust... anybody who want to go and sell [is asked] do you have customer. Nobody wants to be the first person. Just because this company gave us that opportunity to be the first customer, this made it much easier for us to go and tell the second customer that we already have a customer and you are not the first guy. So in that way it definitely helped.

One critical feature of social capital is its exclusivity. By its very nature, social capital is never available to everyone. The value of social capital primarily lies in its scarcity. It is this scarcity which facilitates social capital to become a tool for 'control' (Burt 1992). Because of this scarcity value, entrepreneurs sought to keep the flow of social capital restricted. It was found that family-based social capital was primarily accessible to entrepreneurs who originated from business families. Coming from a business family was beneficial even if an entrepreneur had family members who were involved in an industry different from the one in which the entrepreneur wanted to venture into. Having family members lacking respective industry background could still be resourceful for the entrepreneur if the family members had connection with people from entrepreneur's target industry as friends and/or professional

colleagues. It was not necessary for such family friends or colleagues of family members to be entrepreneurs. A salaried professional could also possess considerable insider information about an industry. For example, Ajay Aggarwal, got the idea of founding Netware Pvt. Ltd., an enterprise functioning in the internet sector, when his father, also a businessman, paid a social visit to his cousin:

> *I have an uncle who is ... a very senior US-based IT consultant...* he had come to India at that time. So my father met up ... my uncle said that [internet] is an opportunity. Internet at that time was just on the horizon..... So at that time that seemed one industry to get into.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, entrepreneurial social capital may be conceptualised as resources emerging from entrepreneurs' social networks within and outside their family. Leaving aside family members, entrepreneurial network includes relationship with ex-classmates, ex-colleagues, customers, customers of ex-employers, family friends, and individuals referred by family friends as well as by mentors. What may also be included as social capital in the context of entre-preneurship are resources emerging from embeddedness of entrepreneurs in social structures like their extended family and *alma mater*. For example, S. Sivakumar, founder of Datainformatics Pvt. Ltd., said that during the initial phase when he and his partners were running around looking for business, they visited an organisation. While talking to the person concerned, who was completely unknown to them, it came out that all of them were from the same college. That person was really happy to know that some students from his own college were trying to do something on their own. Therefore, he felt that he should do something for them in order to encourage their initiative. The work he gave them was small, but it was a good encouragement for them.

The current study found that such 'non-redundant contacts' of entrepreneurs include 'strong ties', relationships which need to be maintained by spending considerable time and which are characterised by high emotional intensity and reciprocity. This would include relation-ships with family members and friends who provide entrepreneurs an access to their own resources as well as external resources through valuable references. This finding invalidates Granovetter's argument that 'strong ties' can only be a source of support and not of external resources (Granovetter 1973). At the same time, considering the intensity of relationships, it may be deduced from Granovetter (*ibid.*) that the level of trust would be higher in 'strong ties' as compared to 'weak ties'. The current research found that provision of access to resources is strongly

dependent on the level of trust among the partners. If so, it is impractical to think that 'weak ties' can give access to valuable resources. However, sharing of less important informational resources may be feasible even among 'weak ties'. At the same time, the findings of current research endorse the existing idea that 'strong ties' are a source of support (see *ibid.*). Our findings support arguments advocated by researchers about the importance of strong ties for business development (see Luo 1997; Brüderl and Preisendörfer 1998; Davidsson and Honig 2003).

Although it is true that relationship is one primary channel through which reputation develops, it is not the only channel. Reputation of a product/service may also develop through the process of branding which is not necessarily contingent on relationship. Whatever way reputation develops, in order to refer, a referee needs to trust the referred, which means, trust precedes reference. Again, reference in turn, creates trust in the mind of others. Considering that reference is one form of social capital, in the sense that it is a resource which emerges from relationships, it may be concluded that the connection between trust and social capital is cyclical. Therefore, the debate about whether social capital precedes trust or trust precedes social capital (see Putnam 1994; Fukuyama 1996; Dasgupta 2003) is pointless. It would be more appropriate to categorise the relationship between social capital and trust as supportive of each other.

As discussed earlier in this paper, prior researchers (see Zhao and Aram 1995; Caulkins and Peters 2002; Davidsson and Honig 2003; Frazier and Niehm 2004; Tötterman and Sten 2005; Rindova *et al.* 2007), in their attempt to measure social capital, have considered entrepreneur's access to relationships that may have resource potential. However, potential is often not realised and, therefore, it is not appropriate to consider resource potential of a relationship for measuring social capital. Even if such measurements may have some reliability, their validity is questionable. Instead what is necessary is to measure resource outcome of a relationship. However, given the fuzzy nature of social capital, identification of indicators for measuring resource outcome of relationships is difficult. The next section would attempt to address this difficulty with the help of empirical data.

Forms of Social Capital

In order to understand social capital as resource outcome of relationships it is necessary to focus on the forms of capital which relationship generates. With this purpose we intend to highlight in this section the forms which social capital may take in order to provide access to various

resources that entrepreneurs require. Our data suggests the presence of three distinct forms of social capital in the context of entrepreneurship, namely, support, reference, and goodwill. These resources in turn act as intermediaries for facilitating access to various other resources like finance, market information, customers, etc.

Support

Support is a resource which may develop only out of relationships. By support we mean instances where acquaintances of entrepreneurs decide to extend their monetary or non-monetary resources to the entrepreneur, particularly during the initial phase of their business. Such acquaintances usually include family members, friends, and/or well-wishers. Unlike reference or goodwill, support may evolve usually from intimate relationships. More often we found that support came in the form of non-monetary resources like physical infrastructure. For example, Rupa Datta, founder of Infonet Pvt. Ltd., received strong infrastructural support from her father, who is a Chartered Accountant. She said,

> I started at the back of my dad's office on a single table. I was lucky that initially also he gave me some space, space being the main thing that you need in Bombay [she is located in Bombay]. Then I was lucky that we had an office which was lying around, which was not really being used and I could pay rent and I could start. So I have been lucky in that space that I had family-owned properties that I could move in. And then I was even further luckier when I decided to move to a bigger place my dad said I will buy the property, you give me rent. I had just been very lucky about infrastructure. So again you get it down to family support in my case. For me, infrastructure has come relatively easy.

Support comes in the form of funding as well. For example, Ajay Aggarwal, founder of Netware Pvt. Ltd., and Dinesh Marwari, founder of Ryze Softech Pvt. Ltd., both from business families, started their organisation with family funding. Anil Deshpande, who is not from a business family, also received some token funding from his family members particularly from his in-laws while founding Tech Writers Inc. One may also extend support by becoming customer and such supportive relationship may emerge out of embeddedness in social structure like *alma mater*. Experience of S. Sivakumar, founder of Datainformatics Pvt. Ltd. in getting initial business through an ex-student from his college, as mentioned in the last section, is an apposite example in this respect.

Reference

Reference is another resource which often emerges out of relationship. Reference, as a concept, here would indicate the process through which an individual, who is familiar with the entrepreneur and/or her/his business offering, acts as referee in the decision-making process of economic actors significant for an entrepreneur's business development, for example, a potential customer, a prospective financier, etc. The task of the referee is to vouch for the trustworthiness of the entrepreneur and/or her/his business offerings. Trust here involves reliability of entrepreneur as a person, worth of an organisation, and effectiveness and efficiency of a business offering. Confidence to act as a referee often develops through relationships.

Relationships promoting reference need not be based on personal intimacy. In fact, a large number of such relationships are purely formal business transactions. A referee may be a person who has once been a customer of the entrepreneur. Although, having a business relationship may help an individual develop familiarity about a product/service, having a personal relationship is essential for knowing the entrepreneur. Broadly, it is possible to identify two types of references. In the first type of reference, which is more prevalent, an entrepreneur may mention about her/his association with the referee to others in order to develop confidence in their mind. Those 'others' may, in turn, seek reference by getting in touch with the referee, although they may not be personally known to each other. In the second type of reference, which any entrepreneur values much more than the first type, people familiar with the entrepreneur and/or her/his business offering may vouch for them in their own circle. For example, Kirti Harlalka, founder of Knowhow said,

> [The first client] came through a reference. I had gone somewhere for a [job] interview after I had quit my last job. The interviewer happened to know me. He was actually my neighbour.... And after getting selected I realised that the job required travelling and I didn't want to travel. So I said that, you know, I would rather be a freelancer, than take up a job which requires travelling. So he ... referred this person [the first client] to me because he got this enquiry from somewhere. So anyway, that was my first project.

Reference becomes a resource in establishing reputation by acting as a bridge over a 'structural hole' between 'non-redundant contacts' (see Burt 1992). For example, Sudha Sharma, founder of Design Lab, recalled: 'we did his [initial customer's] website and another company MD had come to visit him or whatsoever on work and he saw his

website. Instantly he gave me a call from his office saying that I would like to meet you and ask you to do my website'. However, as it has already been mentioned, reputation may develop even without reference like in the case of brand-building.

Goodwill

Like reference, goodwill is another resource which emerges out of relationships. However, unlike reference, which may at times emerge even without relationships, goodwill can emerge only through relationships. Goodwill often develops through demonstration of what could be called 'favour'. However, it was observed that, for many entrepreneurs, 'favour' was a politically incorrect word. Instead, some entrepreneurs preferred the term 'demonstration of flexibility'. Goodwill in the form of flexibility was found to be particularly useful in retaining a customer in a service-based company. If the entrepreneur shows flexibility he/she can expect flexibility in return from the customer, and the customer is also obligated to reciprocate. However, such a relationship would develop only if norm of 'reciprocity' exists in the social structure. Considering the resource value of such reciprocity emerging out of 'convertibility of capital' (see Bourdieu 1997), goodwill can be termed as social capital. This also supports findings of existing research (see Fukuyama 1996, 2000; Lin 2003; Frazier and Niehm 2004; Anderson et al. 2007).

Flexibility can take different meanings in different contexts. One strategy for such flexibility is termed as 'going out of the way'. This may include helping a customer solve some problems even if the customer is not paying for it. For example, according to Akhtar Hussain, founder of Communication Networks,

> ….when I started my career in IT services it was primarily in hardware. [One of my Clients] was using a software... which had its own problems.... They had a tough time getting it resolved ... they had a very tough time contacting that software vendor and even for small issues then they have to keep trying to contact them. So we tried to get knowledge about the software... and resolve all these small problems, which the software vendor was not able to cater very promptly.

Another related strategy is termed as 'showing personal touch'. This would imply considering customer's problem as one's own. Entre-preneurs 'go out of the way' for 'showing personal touch'. If an entre-preneur adopts such strategies, there is a chance that customers would

show patience when the entrepreneur is going through internal troubles like employee attrition. However, not all entrepreneurs agreed that relationship takes care of all business problems. Goodwill, according to some entrepreneurs like Naresh Ponnaiah, founder of Sunshine Technologies Ltd., has limited effect in the sense that it will take care of present disturbances, but if one does not rectify the problem and get back on track, goodwill will soon get exhausted. Relationship is a reserve which is to be considered as the last resort. It is tremendously precious, because once it has been used to cover up some mistake the entrepreneur is left with no protection.

Relationships emerge out of trust and, at the same time, they generate trust. No resource flow takes place among actors without the presence of trust in relationships. Having such trusted relationship directly with individuals who possess resources that entrepreneurs require for developing business is useful as a source of support. However, relationship with others may also be useful for business if it gives rise to unique relationship-based resources like reference and goodwill, which are useful media for accessing resources from significant others. This implies that relationships by themselves are not social capital. They become social capital only when resources like support, reference, or goodwill emerge from them.

Transformation in Utilisation of Social Capital

Social capital is often perceived as static in terms of its functions. However, we found that forms of social capital and their importance for business development are subject to constant modification. For example, it was found that as an organisation scaled up, the role that could be played by personal social networks of entrepreneurs went down consistently. Instead, importance of institutionalised networks, organisation and processes increased. This did not mean that personal social networks of entrepreneurs became unimportant; rather, the nature of relationship required for business developed out of business reputation rather than intimacy. There was no substitute for personal comfort level.

It would be difficult to state that the forms of social capital identified in the last section are associated with different stages of entrepreneurship. Support, Reference, and Goodwill may be functional as social capital in all stages of business. Nevertheless, given that it takes time for any enterprise to develop goodwill, the chance is less that goodwill can be used in early phase of business as social capital. This inference, however, excludes the entrepreneurs who have the privilege of building their business on the goodwill of established enterprises from the very

beginning. This category may include entrepreneurs from business family background.

The way in which a relational capital was utilised changed over time. For example, during the initial phase of business, it was often the reputation of the entrepreneur's ability that built trust in the mind of the prospective customers. With time, every growth-oriented company sought to reduce customer's reliance on this personalised reputation and instead built reputation of the organisation and its business offerings. At the same time, business networks increased from networks established by entrepreneurs to networks established by organisation, which included those formed by the employees as well as those by the entrepreneur. This was because personal relationship had its limitation in expanding the business beyond one level. Though personal relationship continued to play an important role, there was need to back it up with institutional effort. This observation was similar to the findings of previous researchers (see BarNir and Smith 2002; Shaw 2006).

It was found that the basis of investors' decision varied depending on the maturity of an organisation. During the initial phase of development of a company, investors were interested in knowing about the earlier professional performance of the founder; in the later phase of a company, they were interested in knowing about the performance of that company. Interestingly, relationship played an important role in identifying a prospective investor at any stage of business. In the early stage, investors also used relationships to assess the individual track record and trust-worthiness of the entrepreneur. These relationships were built up with entrepreneurs when they were working as employees. Investments at later stages were driven more by performance data. However, while approaching the investors, entrepreneurs were guided by their comfort level with the investors.

During the initial stage of business, relationship played an important role in identifying human resource. In fact, for most enterprises each and every initial key appointment was relationship-driven. However, as business started growing, other channels began getting prominence. These channels included advertisements, recruitment portals, recruitment agencies, and campus placements at academic institutions. This is not to say that relationship became unimportant. Instead, it became one of the many channels. In slow-growth businesses, however, relationship continued to remain the sole channel of recruitment. In moderate growth companies as well there was a possibility for dependence on relation-ships for recruitment. These relationships included those of entrepreneurs as well as those of employees. Involvement of entrepreneurs in the recruitment process also changed with time. During the incubation period

entrepreneurs were involved in all recruitments, and as enterprise started growing entrepreneurs participated mostly in key recruitments; rest was looked after by the recruitment team of the enterprise. Over a period of time, network with founding partners transformed from social to business relationship. During the same time, network with customers and financiers changed from business to social relationship. Similar observations were found by prior researchers (see Schutjens and Stam 2003).

Conclusion: Possible Directions for Measurement

Based on the preceding discussions we would like to argue that entrepreneurial social capital may be measured by exploring the presence of the three different forms of social capital mentioned above, namely, support, reference, and goodwill. Given that each of these forms represents resource outcome of relationships, using them for measuring social capital would make the measurement highly valid. The parameters of measurement would have to be formed keeping in mind the intention of measuring the outcome of support, reference, and goodwill. For example, it would be necessary to find how a reference has benefited the entrepreneurial venture.

Using these indicators for measuring social capital would facilitate application of not only qualitative data, but also quantitative data. With the hitherto existing indicators, like size of network and frequency of contacts, measurement of entrepreneurial social capital using quantitative data was difficult, as those indicators measured resource potential and not resource outcome. With these new indicators, numerical measurement should become feasible using interval scale. This would facilitate comparison among social capital of entrepreneurs which was difficult to conduct using qualitative data given its emphasis on subjective interpretation of reality. Various parameters which may be used for performing such comparison would include the number of times an entrepreneur has received support, reference, and/or goodwill. It may also include the extent to which these forms of social capital were beneficial for developing the business. Further research would be necessary for exploring the specific indicators for identification of such social capital as well as procedures for measurement of their impact.

Acknowledgements

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The Politics of Sikh Identity:
Understanding Religious Exclusion

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The issue of Sikh identity has never been laid to rest by any section of Sikh religio-political leadership in Punjab. Controlled by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) – a statutory body established through legislative enactment – the identity issue has been swinging like a pendulum from one extreme to another. Instead of recognising diversity in the Sikh tradition, there have been attempts to construct singular identity. Caught between political pragmatism and the extremist threat, the Akali Dal, which controls both political power in the state and the religious affairs through SGPC, has continued to take ambivalent position. This article explores the basic paradox of Sikh identity by delineating how ambivalence creates inclusion and exclusion within the Sikh community and why it remains politically functional for the Sikh leadership, which has never bothered to involve the Sikh masses in the discourse through democratic process.

[Keywords: exclusion; inclusion; identity; Khalsa; Sikh community]

The identity question in Sikhism has been coming to the fore time and again since the second half of the 19th century when the Singh Sabha movement began. The need for an examination of the issue has arisen largely due to the recent controversy resulting from the admission of the Sikh students in the educational institutions run by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (henceforth SGPC) within the Sikh community. It all began in July 2008 over the admission in graduate programmes of Sri Guru Ram Das Institute of Medical Sciences and Research at Amritsar. Let us begin with the reactions of some parents whose children were

probably denied admission. The following news item is an interesting text in this regard:

> Expressing dismay over the admission of certain children of parents with shorn hair and trimmed beard, Sikh parents of several students today threatened to move the court against the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) if it failed to deliver justice to staunch Sikh children under the minority quota in the SGPC-run Sri Guru Ram Das Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (Bumbroo 2008).

Five days later, the following news item appeared in *The Tribune* (Jalandhar, 30 July 2008: 4):

> Can Sikhs 'trimming beards' and plucking eyebrows be denied admission in institutions with seats reserved for Sikh candidates? is the vital question of law raised by five students in a petition filed before the Punjab and Haryana High Court.
>
> Gurleen Kaur and others have claimed that they have been denied admissions to MBBS course in Sri Guru Ram Das Institute of Medical Sciences and Research at Amritsar on the ground that they were either trimming their beards or were plucking their eyebrows, as such, they were not professing Sikh religion.
>
> On the law point, they contended that Amritdharis, Sehajdharis and Keshdharis were included in the definition of Sikhs in the Sikh Gurdwara Act. Even Sikhs trimming their beard or hair were included. As such it was not open to the college to exclude them.

These two texts are an indication of the fractured or possibly composite character of the Sikh identity. The catholicity of Sikhism with regard to identity seems to be severely undermined by the issue of admission to the students in the Sikh institutions. However, there are divergent trajectories in the narratives of these texts. Let us look into what is being contested by different agents involved in the controversy around the Sikh identity before taking into cognisance of the response of the Sikh establishment, which is not explicitly responsible for defining and changing the definition of 'Sikh'. In the first case, the parents of those children who were denied admission are complaining that some of the students admitted to the medical programmes, and/or their parents are not 'Sikhs'. By implication, it has been claimed that it is important that not only the student, but also her/his parents should be 'Sikh' in a defined manner, and keeping unshorn hair becomes the defining principle of Sikh identity. Obviously, the second case is a corollary of the first, but with one difference. If the parents of the students admitted do not keep unshorn hair, then their admission could be challenged on the

ground that their parents are not 'Sikhs'. Thus, it is not only the person but also his parents/forefathers should have or be keeping unshorn hair. Crisis emerged when the students or their parents who were trimming their beard/plucking eyebrows were denied admission.

 Since the matter went to the High Court, SGPC was asked to clarify the issue with regard to the definition of 'Sehajdhari Sikh'. It was widely believed that the Sehajdhari Sikh is one who believes in the Sikh Gurus but does not keep unshorn hair. Viewed thus, the Sikh identity was linked with the sacred principle of the religion, which is generally the case with most religions. However, instead of making Sikh principles the basis of Sikh identity, SGPC decided to have a fresh look into the definition of Sehajdhari Sikh. It was clear from the outset that the effort was oriented towards changing the definition of the Sehajdhari Sikh by putting it into a monolithic Sikh tradition. A panel of Sikh experts constituted by SGPC stated that 'A person cannot claim to be a Sehajdhari by trimming/cutting his/her beard or eyebrows in any manner' (Walia 2008: 4). However, the executive committee of SGPC maintained that the definition given in the Sikh Gurdwara Act, 1925, was valid. According to Section 2 (10- A) of the Gurdwara Act,

> A Sehajdhari ... is one who has entered the path of Sikhism and will continue to be a Sehajdhari Sikh till he fully accepts the moral and spiritual vows of Sikhism, to be called a practising Sikh. The SGPC resolution also made it clear that when a Sehajdhari Sikh becomes a Keshdhari Sikh, but he chooses to trim his body hair, he will not be a Sehajdhari Sikh. Similarly, if a person born into a Sikh family (and is a Sikh), but chooses to disrespect his keshdhari roop [form] he will not turn into a Sehajdhari Sikh but become a 'Patit' (*ibid.*).

The recent controversy has thus created a situation wherein, in the process of defining the Sehajdhari Sikh, the Sikh establishment and the intelligentsia have tried to redefine 'Sikh' solely in terms of form and appearance manifested through keeping unshorn hair. It is clear that the Khalsa identity, regarded as synonymous with the Amritdhari (baptised) Sikh within the Sikh tradition, has not only been clearly delineated, defined, and imposed, but is also non-negotiable.[1] There are now three bases of Sikh identity, namely, Amritdhari, Keshdhari, and Sehajdhari. If any person claiming to be a Sikh does not qualify himself as belonging to one of these identities, he may be called *patit*, which literally means impure/polluted.

 In the backdrop of the present controversy over Sikh identity, certain questions could be raised. Why has the question of Sikh identity not been resolved yet? What is the history of the emergence of conflicting Sikh

identities, if any? Why has there been a lot of stress on unshorn hair in the making of Sikh identity? Is it possible to have an estimate of the proportions of different categories of Sikh, including *patit*, in the Sikh community? Is there any connection between the Sikh politics and the Sikh identity construction? To start with, in the following section we shall discuss the various streams in the construction of Sikh identity.

Emergence and Growth of the Sikh Identity

The Sikh religion was founded by Guru Nanak Dev in the 16th century. The teachings of Guru Nanak Dev and those of his successors as well as the writings of some other saints were compiled by the fifth guru, Guru Arjan Dev, in 1604 as the Adi-Granth, the sacred scripture of the Sikhs. Tradition and legend inform that Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth guru, brought fundamental changes in the Sikh belief system and practices, as he founded Khalsa Panth in 1699. Baptism ceremony obliged the followers to keep unshorn hair, wear arms and use the epithet 'Singh' in their names. This distinguished 'Singhs' from other Sikhs, though, at that time, it did not involve any discourse of identity. Besides, a militant ideology articulated and legitimised armed struggle against oppression when all the alternative means were exhausted.[2] Another significant contribution of Guru Gobind Singh that added to the distinctiveness of the Panth was that he abolished personal guruship before his death in 1708 and conferred guruship upon the Panth – the Sangat (congregation) and the Granth (the scared book) (Judge 2005: 17).

After Guru Gobind Singh, the rise of Sikhs to power was a part of the political process marked by three factors: (i) the decisive decline of the Moghul Empire and its power by the middle of the 18th century that gave way for other powers to emerge, namely, the Marathas and the British; (ii) the Sikhs' determined confrontation with invaders such as Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali; and (iii) the Third Battle of Panipat in 1761 that ended the expansionist designs of the Marathas. However, the pinnacle of the rise to power of the Sikhs was achieved in 1799 with the founding of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's empire. During his reign, the bulk of the ruling class consisted of the 'Singhs', who predominantly belonged to the Jat caste. Patronage was extended to Sikhs of other affiliations too. In fact, chroniclers have recorded the existence of class and caste distinctions within the Sikh society despite the apparent egalitarianism of the religion. The Maharaja died in 1839 and, as the Sikh power waned within a decade, the British finally annexed his empire in 1849.

The interaction between the British and the Sikhs can be divided into three phases. The first phase (1849-1906) was the period of the Sikh support to the British Empire, whereby they were recognised as a martial race and given preferential treatment in the recruitment to the army (*ibid.:* 18). It was also the period of the beginning of religious reform movements, such as the Arya Samaj and the Singh Sabha, the latter emphasising Sikhs' distinct identity and boundary demarcation from Hindus. The second phase (1906-19) began when a section of the Sikhs began opposing the British rule. Starting with the farmers' agitation in the Canal Colonies in 1906, it culminated in the Ghadar movement. The third phase (1920-47) was characterised by communal electorates whereby the Sikhs became differentiated as a political category. As the demand for Pakistan was accepted and India was partitioned in 1947, the attainment of a separate sovereign state based on religion appeared plausible. In the subsequent years, the political vested interests were to articulate the idea of Khalistan, a separate homeland for the Sikhs. Though the demand for Khalistan never became a part of the Sikh leadership's agenda, at certain levels it was always lurking in their minds in one form or the other at the time of independence (*ibid.:* 19).

As far as the identity discourse is concerned, historically, the Sikh society has been marked by plural identities. A.H. Bingley (1985) and A.E. Barstow (see Caton 1999) provide an explicit description of the existence of caste affiliations as significant social formations in the Sikh community. Moreover, since no clear demarcations along identity markers and symbols existed, the religious community was characterised by overlapping creeds and religious traditions. It was the impact of colonialism that necessitated categorisation and construction of 'religious' communities. Such categorisation of communities along 'compart-mentalised' religious lines was actually impregnated in the western vision of the social world that influenced the subject society also (McLeod 2008).

Meanwhile, various indigenous religious reforms movements were launched as reaction to the evangelical missions in the late 19th century, contributing to defining the contours of the respective religious communities. The Singh Sabha movement took to the task of demarcating and constructing boundaries of the Sikh community vis-à-vis the Hindus (Caton 1999). In the process, the history was revisited and reinterpreted. The Tat Khalsa succeeded in its efforts and 'Khalsa' identity acquired pre-eminence and sanction of the Sikh elite to be the true Sikh identity.

Alternatively, it is argued that British tended to construct the social structure of the Indian society in terms of caste affiliations that tended to

give an underlying unity to the society irrespective of the different religions. In such a situation, Sikhism felt most threatened, as it perceived itself closer to Hinduism (Judge 2005: 22-23). Being a small religious community, the Sikhs sought to construct their religious identity distinct from the then existing religious communities, lest they might get submerged. This explains the zeal and commitment of the Singh Sabha movement to reinterpret history and emphasise a single form of Sikh identity.

In order to demarcate the boundaries between Sikhism and Hinduism, on the one hand, and revive the spirit of Sikhism with 'Khalsa' identity as its focal point, on the other hand, contemporary scholars of Singh Sabha movement reinterpreted the religious and semi-religious scriptures as well as reconstructed the Sikh history: *Panth Parkash* by Gyani Gyan Singh, *Ham Hindu Nahin* by Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha, *Baba Banda Bahadur* by Karam Singh, and *Sundari* by Bhai Vir Singh require special mention. The emphasis of these late 19th century works is on constructing the Sikh history independent of any Brahmanical influence, glorifying the sacrifices made by the fifth and ninth Gurus while fighting social injustice against the contemporary oppressive rulers and religious orthodoxy and hailing the spirit of Khalsa and idealising the character of true Sikhs (Joginder Singh 1997: 52-55; Bal 2006). In this way, the tradition of martyrdom was incorporated and imbued into the collective consciousness of the Sikh masses by the efforts of the Singh Sabha ideologues and attempts were made to establish the distinction between the Hindus and the Sikhs.

It is worthwhile considering identity as contextual, as it is only amidst existing socio-political conditions that representatives of a group or section of a group, while securing certain interests and benefits, tend to espouse the identity of the group. Identity provides an individual or a group a position and orientation in the social world vis-à-vis 'others' (Greenfeld 2007). Wherever there is a process of co-operation and/or competition or conflict, explicit definition of 'us' and 'they' is solicited to obviate any confusion. Defining the Sikh identity also involves issues concerning boundaries, culture, and practice and also includes debates over formal requirements and rituals as set forth by various *rahatnamas* (code of conduct) including the 'Sikh Rahat Maryada' (Barrier 1999). As these and related questions have been dealt at different levels and circles, one finds different interpretations and responses about them.

'Sikh Rahat Maryada', first published in 1950, was the first official publication of SGPC to define 'who is the Sikh' and to regulate the religious affairs of the Sikhs at both the individual and the collective (Panth) levels. The definition here is as follows:

· The man or woman who has faith (believes) in one God, ten Gurus (from Shri Guru Nanak Devji to Shri Guru Gobind Singh Sahib), Shri Guru Granth Sahib and the writings and teachings of the ten Gurus and baptism of Dasmeshji [Guru Gobind Singh], and does not believe in any other religion is Sikh (SGPC 2008).

W.H. McLeod (2007) identifies five types of Sikhs: (i) Amritdhari, (ii) Keshdhari, (iii) Sehajdhari, (iv) Khalsa families which permit cutting their hair, also called Mona Sikhs, and (v) Patit (fallen) Sikhs, those Amritdharis 'who have committed one of the four *kurahits*'.[3] Similarly, Pashaura Singh (2004: 103) has categorised the Sikh population world-wide into five categories: (i) Amritdhari, (ii) Keshdhari, (iii) Ichhadhari, (iv) Sehajdhari, and (v) Bikhidhari.[4] The dynamics of variations in the definition of Sikh identity is determined by the socio-political milieu, present and past, and the orientation and disposition of the individuals or groups of individuals defining it.

The present definition of the Sikh, as espoused by SGPC (2008), has come through a series of responses to the historical events and contexts, which are discussed in the following section. It will be seen that the process of constructing the 'Khalsa' identity as the true Sikh identity had started in the late 19th century. This involved employing new institutions, rituals, and legal norms (Oberoi 1994). In the process of constructing, defining, and articulating the Sikh identity, the 'outward appearance' of Khalsa identity became the key symbol. Hence, *kesh* (unshorn hair) acquired the prime position as a symbol of the Sikh identity. This is also obvious from the categorisation and classification of Sikhs as given in the SGPC Act and by various scholars that have unshorn hair as a reference point to which different categories of Sikhs conform to or deviate from. One can safely state that it is due to its association with *kesh* that turban has acquired centrality to the identity issue of the Sikhs in the diaspora. McLeod (2007: 25) points out, it was not before the late 19th century and the creation of Singh Sabha that the turban came to be linked to *kesh,* Sikh honour, and the Khalsa. According to him, ironically though, even those Sikhs who cut their hair (whom he refers to Mona Sikhs) also tie it when visiting Gurdwaras or attending Panthic cere-monies. Here, it may be mentioned that there are alternative viewpoints regarding the 'construction' of Khalsa Sikh identity.

State, Law, and the Sikh Identity

The history of the Sikh community is inseparably linked with the policy of the British towards the Sikhs which, in certain ways, was unique in comparison to other religious communities in India. The most distinctive

feature of this policy was the legal definition of the Sikh. There is hardly any community in the world that has got legal identity in the form of an enactment, because the religious identities have been historically competing with the state for power and influence. The separation of the crown and the cross ushered in modernity in the West. Why did the Sikhs feel the need for state intervention with regard to a matter which was not its concern? What are the historical circumstances that necessitated this intervention? Why did the state enact the Gurdwara Act that also involved the definition of 'Sikh'? To understand the circumstances leading to the enactment of the Gurdwara Act in 1925, there is a need to understand the interaction between the colonial state and the Sikhs in the second half of the 19th century.

When Punjab was annexed by the British in 1849 it was under the reign of Sikh rulers. Followed by the victory in the two Anglo-Sikh wars, the British finally took over the control of Punjab. Within a decade, the British faced a major challenge to its rule when the sepoy mutiny combined with the revolt by the local rulers and princes turned into India's first war of Independence in 1857. After the British managed to retain their dominance and control, they focused on the need for nurturing certain people and communities for continuing support to the Raj. The Sikhs became one of the communities that got special attention from the British rulers. The establishment of Canal Colonies and the rehabilitation of a large number of small peasants from the eastern Punjab as well as the Sikh soldiers were moves to please the Sikhs. The British army recruitment policy identified and gave preference to certain castes among the Sikhs as a martial race.

The most important component of the British policy towards the Sikhs was the creation of a particular Sikh identity. Richard G. Fox is of the view that, among the plural identities that existed among the Sikhs in the 19th century, 'the British usually treated one Sikh identity, the Singh or Lion one, as the only true Sikhism, and they often used the labels 'Sikh' and 'Singh' interchangeably' (1987: 7). Bingley (1985), who wrote his book in the 1880s, expressed the fear that the Sikh faith could become extinct, as the Sikhs were adopting the Hindu way of life. Since Bingley was interested in the Sikhs for recruiting them in the army, he was for a separate religious identity of the Sikhs so that they could not merge with the Hindus. It was in this context that Pashaura Singh's comment that the Khalsa identity has been the result of the negotiation between the British and the Sikh leadership becomes a significant aspect in the understanding of the construction of Sikh identity (2004). According to Pashaura Singh, the tenth Guru had asked his Khalsa to keep, besides the unshorn hair, five arms – an identity marker that was

not acceptable to the colonial masters. The Sikh leaders agreed to replace the five weapons with the five 'Ks', which became the widely accepted Khalsa identity. It may be noted that the British enforced this identity in the Sikh regiment strictly. The retired Sikh soldiers from the army became the voice of the Tat Khalsa in the Singh Sabha movement, which, as mentioned earlier, had played a defining role in constructing Sikh identity in terms of 'Singh' or 'Khalsa' identity towards the end of the 19th century. Hence, both the British government and the Sikh leadership pursued the project of purging Sikhism of its diversities and ambiguities; s imultaneously, for their respective causes and interests, reinforcing uniformity and demarcating boundaries of the religious identity.

In 1902, another Sikh body, the Chief Khalsa Diwan, which was a loose confederation of over a hundred Sikh units, was founded. This new body upheld Tat Khalsa ideals and, in order to promote and preach the distinctiveness of Sikhism, it devised new policies and programmes, such as generating large funds, setting up tract societies and disseminating Tat Khalsa views and themes through pamphlets and literature, establishing orphanages, setting up a network of schools affiliated to the Sikh Education Conference, training *granthis* (priests who recite hymns from the Guru Granth Sahib) and *ragis* (religious singers), etc. With the consent of the British, the Chief Khalsa Diwan succeeded in instituting holidays in honour of Sikh traditions and leaders, championing Punjabi in schools, and extracting a compromise legislation enabling Sikhs to wear sword publicly. Perhaps the most far reaching endeavour was to get the Anand Marriage Act (Sikh Marriage Act) passed in 1907 (Barrier 1999: 39).

It is worth mentioning that, when the Anand Marriage Bill was introduced and mooted in the Punjab Legislative Council, it had to face strong opposition and apprehensions, particularly over the definition of 'Sikh'. In order to rid any fears, it was stated on the floor of the House that 'the Bill included the Sehajdharis and Keshdharis and all those who believed in the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib as their religion' (Joginder Singh 1997: 51). Actually, as the elective procedures and communal representation were introduced in the political arena in the initial decades of the 20th century, numerical strength of the community became a prime concern of the Chief Khalsa Diwan leaders and the political and economic interests of the community they represented. This refrained the Chief Khalsa Diwan from taking rigid postures regarding boundaries and rituals of the Sikh community in general and the issues of Sikh *rahit* and Amritdhari-Sehajdhari relations in particular (Barrier 1999: 41). They adopted an inclusive approach towards defining the contours of the community. Here, it would be interesting to note that, just

as focus and emphasis of the Sikh leadership regarding the definition of Sikh shifted, there was a simultaneous change in the definitions in the Census enumerations. The Census of India 1891 and 1901 entered only those persons as Sikhs who kept unshorn hair and abstained from tobacco. However, in 1911, all individuals who stated that they were Sikhs, irrespective of observance of above mentioned injunctions, were enumerated as such. Thus, even Sehajdharis and lower-caste-Hindu converts were included, and this increased the number of persons returned as Sikhs.

Meanwhile, the Singh Sabha movement culminated in the gurdwara reform movement in the second decade of the 20th century, for there was a need for control over the gurdwaras to enforce the tenets of the faith. The gurdwaras were largely under the control of the Mahants whose model of Sikhism was different from, if not contrary to, what the emerging Akalis understood it to be. The gurdwara reform movement was carried out non-violently under the influence of Gandhi's theory of Satygraha. However, the gurdwara reform movement succeeded in convincing the British government to enact the law and thus, in 1925, the Sikh Gurdwara Act was passed. As a result of the Act, the management of the historical gurdwaras was handed over to the committee that was called the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), a statutory body whose members were to be elected by the Sikh masses.[5]

Thus, historically, the evolution of Sikh identity has been a complex process that had social, political, and legal determinants. Different parties and sections of the people had their own interests and purposes while steering the process forward, and in its course various identity related issues have remained unsettled. Also, the Sikh identity as historically articulated, was at times exclusive or inclusive in connotation. The enactment of the Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Act in 1971 has only confounded the complexity of the identity debate. N.G. Barrier has tended to explain the problems in providing an ultimate definition of a Sikh in the light of political considerations of 'some like minded people, th e purpose of whom was to control institutions and resources and to be recognised as legitimate leaders' (1999: 35) of that particular section of the community. Clearly, articulation of Sikh identity in a particular manner has direct correlation with the distribution of benefits to a particular section of individuals as well as to the wielding of the influence and legitimacy among them, to the exclusion of 'others'. For instance, whereas the Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1971, disqualifies Sehajdharis from voting for the membership of the boards and committees of the institution as they are not included in the definition of 'Sikh' as per the Act, SGPC passed a resolution to this effect in 2001 and the Government of India issued a

notification in this regard in 2003. As Sehajdhari Sikhs were disenfranchised, exclusive rights were given to the Khalsa Sikhs to manage Sikh shrines. It is often argued that the Sehajdharis were not excommunicated from the Sikh community, but were only denied of exercising any control or influence over the management of Sikh shrines. Earlier, the definition of the Sikh in the Act of 1925 had a broader connotation due to which the dominance of the Amritdharis and Keshdharis was not specifically institutionalised. Only *patit*s were debarred from voting or holding offices. Though there was a view that, by implication, it meant debarring of Sehajdharis also from exercising any rights in SGPC, in actual practice such enforcement had never taken place (McLeod 2008: 83-96). For further analysis and to understand the way the state becomes a participant in the construction of religious identity, the definitions provided in the Act of 1925 could be taken as the starting point:

> 'Sikh' means a person who professes the Sikh religion....In case there is some problem he has to give the following declaration:
>
> > 'I solemnly affirm that I am a Sikh, that I believe in the Guru Granth Sahib, that I believe in the Ten Gurus, and that I have no other religion'.
>
> 'Amritdhari Sikh' means and includes every person who has taken *Khande-ka-amrit* or *Khanda pahul* prepared and administered according to the tenets of Sikh religion and rites at the hands of five *pyara*s or 'beloved ones'.
>
> 'Sehajdhari Sikh' means a person (i) who performs ceremonies according to Sikh rites; (ii) who does not use tobacco or *Kutha* (*halal* meat) in any form; (iii) who is not a *patit*; and (iv) who can recite *Mul Mantar*.
>
> '*Patit*' means a person who being a Keshdhari Sikh trims or shaves beard or *kesha*s or who after taking *amrit* commits any one or more of the four *kurahit*s (cited in Kashmir Singh 1989:349-50; see also Navkiran Singh 2004).

However, according to the Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1971, 'Sikh means a person who professes the Sikh religion, believes and follows the teachings of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and the ten Gurus only and keeps unshorn hair' (Government of India 2000: 2). The difference between the original definition of Sikh and the one in the Delhi Act is with regard to the keeping of unshorn hair.

To articulate an undisputed Sikh identity has been a major concern, most elusive too, of the Sikh ecclesiastical leadership. In the following

paragraphs an attempt will be made to explore the underlying political dynamics in the running of the Sikh ecclesiastical affairs and its implications for the articulation of an exclusive/inclusive Sikh identity. To begin with, three aspects of the SGPC Act are important for our purpose as these had serious consequences for the issue of Sikh identity. First, SGPC is elected by the Sikh masses. Second, the Act defines the qualifications of a Sikh to be the member of SGPC and vote in its elections. This definition of the Sikh as provided by the Act of 1925 has been recurrently revised by SGPC with the concurrence of the Government of Punjab. As discussed above, the state intervention has been flexible and inconsistent with regard to the definition of Sikh, which means that as and when the Sikh religious leadership put pressure on the state, the latter obliged them through amendments. Moreover, the definition of Sikh in the Act is not inclusive; rather, it excludes a large number of those people who claim to be Sikhs. Clearly, the number of voters in the SGPC elections is dramatically less than the number of persons voting during the Assembly/Lok Sabha elections claiming to be Sikhs and voting for the Panth. And, third, the main function of SGPC as stated in the Act is to manage the Sikh historical gurdwaras; this implies that not all the gurdwaras of Punjab were under its jurisdiction. Actually, there is a list of gurdwaras that are identified as historical which are controlled by SGPC. Most of these gurdwaras are related with events in the lives of the ten Sikh gurus. Obviously, those gurdwaras that are not controlled by SGPC have their own management committees, whose members are drawn from the local communities. Empirically, every locality of the Sikhs in the cities as well as villages is likely to have one gurdwara for various social occasions, the most important being the solemnisation of marriage. In the villages of Punjab, the SGPC's rules are never enforced in the functioning of these gurdwaras. No contest of definitions of Sikh occurs in most of the villages. In other words, these social gurdwaras existed as autonomous units till the 1980s. It was only during the Sikh extremist/Khalistan movement that attempts were made by the militants to impose a particular kind of Sikh identity on persons managing the gurdwaras in villages (Judge 2005).

In addition to SGPC, there is a body of three persons, called Judicial Commission, which plays an important role in the running of gurdwaras and the Sikh ecclesiastical affairs. According to Kashmir Singh, 'The Judicial Commission is basically a judicial body which directly and substantially controls the functioning and operation of the Gurdwara management' (1989: 192). The appointment of the members of the Commission is an important aspect of its operation. One of the members is appointed by the Punjab government, the other two are appointed by

the government from a list of seven persons recommended by SGPC. As a result of the state involvement in the management of gurdwaras, it is imperative for SGPC to constantly engage the state agents in various issues. The interaction between the state and SGPC, which becomes the only body representing the Sikhs, may not be always congenial and positive. The political party ruling the state interferes in the affairs of SGPC through the appointment of the Judicial Commission.

Thus, the issue of Sikh identity is much more complex than it is generally thought. However, the construction of Sikh identity has become the exclusive responsibility of SGPC, which is not without hiccups. In the light of the above, the next section takes cognisance of how the construction of Sikh identity entails the politics of exclusion and inclusion.

The Politics of Exclusion and Inclusion

An elected body, SGPC is legally responsible for the management of Sikh shrines in Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. The gurdwaras in Delhi are managed by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee. The Akali party, which controls SGPC, is one of the two major political parties of Punjab, the other being the Congress party. By virtue of the periodic elections, SGPC is open to political competition for controlling the management of gurdwaras. However, the domination of the Akali party has not been seriously challenged despite the fact that in 1979 elections the then militant Sikh leader and the head of the Damdami Taksal, Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwala unsuccessfully fought against the Akalis. He and his candidates lost the elections. There is a general impression that the Akali party derives its resources in terms of funding and unabated contact with the orthodox sections of the Sikh masses from its control over SGPC. It has its own budget that runs into millions of rupees: the budget rose from 190 crore rupees in 2002 to 256 crore rupees in 2005, and it exceeded 300 crore mark in 2009.[6] It is because of its financial resources and its functioning autonomy as provided under the Act that it is also called the mini-parliament of the Sikhs.

The income of SGPC is utilised for various purposes, some of which are clearly stated in the Act. For example, SGPC is supposed to earmark a fund for carrying out research in Sikh history (Kashmir Singh 1989). The upkeep and maintenance of the gurdwaras and payment of salaries to the staff are other areas of expenditure. In addition, SGPC has been involved in various social sector activities: it has been running schools, colleges, and hospitals at different places in Punjab, in particular. Sri Guru Ram Das Institute of Medial Sciences and Research, Amritsar combines medical education and healthcare. Admission to the educational

institutions in general is based on the broader guidelines of the university with which they are affiliated, but in the case of the Institute under reference there are some specific guidelines for the Sikh students.

The prospectus of the Institute for 2007 stated, 'All Sikh students admitted in the Institute through Sikh Minority Quota as well as government quota including Non-Resident Indians are not allowed to cut their hair and will obey the code of conduct as SGPC guidelines. Strict action will be taken against the defaulters'. Ironically, as it was informed in the first part of the article, the cancellation of admission of certain students was due to the fact that their parents did not have unshorn hair. Under SGPC, the Keshdhari (unshorn hair) Sikh identity is enforced in three areas: (i) to be member of SGPC, (ii) to be voter in the SGPC elections, and (iii) to get admission under the Sikh minority quota. The Sikhs who are excluded from these privileges are Sehajdharis and Patits. The Patit Sikh is completely excluded from the Sikh faith, though there is a viewpoint that a Patit Sikh is a kind of Sikh identity.

The Shiromani Akali Dal, as mentioned earlier, emerged out of the struggle of the Sikhs for the gurdwara reforms, the purpose of which was to purge the gurdwaras from the Mahants who were controlling them. The word 'Akali' literally means one who has overcome the fear of death and so it seemed during the gurdwara reform movement.[7] In the beginning, the Akalis remained influenced by the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence and, as a result, they had close proximity with the Congress leadership. The emergence of the Akalis as a political party with defined differences with Congress began after the breakdown of the merger in the Congress in 1948. A.S. Narang (2000: 296) is of the view that this merger was limited to the legislative arena and the Akalis maintained their autonomy outside 'parliamentary framework'. The honeymoon with Congress was over within two years, when Master Tara Singh asked the Akali MLAs to leave Congress in July 1950 mainly over the language issue. The controversy over language culminated into the Punjabi Suba movement that was realised in 1966. A.S. Narang (*ibid.*) has rightly remarked that the underlying objective of Punjabi Suba movement was to create a Sikh majority state to ensure majority in the legislative assembly.

The history of the Akali party in Punjab could be divided into two phases: the first phase covering the period between 1966 and 1988, and the second phase beginning after 1996. The gap between the two is the result of governor's rule in Punjab between 1988 and 1992 and the decision of Akalis to boycott assembly elections in 1992, thus paving the way for the coming into power of Beant Singh and the Congress party. Since then, the Congress and the Akalis are alternately coming to power.

In the first phase, the Akali Dal focussed largely on the issues that appealed to the Sikh community. While pinpointing the communal character of Akali politics, Surjit Singh Narang writes, 'Opposition by the Hindus was due to the exclusive character of Akali politics. Akali leadership has never consistently been in a search at a secular identity and has never been anxious to build a composite character' (1981: 20). He is also of the view that the Akalis' construction of 'centre's discrimination against Sikhs' began right at the time of formation of Punjabi Suba, when they thought that all Punjabi-speaking areas had not been included in it. Thus, right from the formation of the Punjabi Suba, the Akali political discourse centred around two issues, namely, the Sikh community called as 'Panth' and the central government's discrimination against the Sikhs. Its legacy of the crusades and concerns regarding religious and Panthic matters was a major source of its strength and support among the Sikh community which it did not want to deny itself '... unless strong alternative resources are available' (Puri 1981: 50). However, as the Akali Dal had to contend with generally the Congress and communist parties banking on the alienated rural poor in the wake of Green Revolution, it experimented with a relatively 'secular' stance. It is evident from the manifestos of the party in the 1967, 1969, 1971 Lok Sabha elections and the 1972 state assembly elections, as also from its moderate disposition during collaboration with the Jana Sangh in 1967 and 1969 (*ibid.:* 41-42). However, once out of power, Akalis reverted to Panthic agenda. Clearly, its 'secular' behaviour can be interpreted as due to political compulsions than out of conviction.

The discourse of discrimination came to a halt after the formation of the Janata Party rule in 1977, because the Akalis were part of the coalition government at the centre. The Akalis came to power in the state for the third time in 1977, and between 1977 and 1980 the decision regarding SYL (Satluj-Yamuna Link) Canal was taken with the tacit approval of the Akalis. However, in 1980, when Mrs Indira Gandhi, after coming to power in Lok Sabha, dissolved all state assemblies, and the Congress party came to power, the Akalis began to agitate against the SYL Canal while raising the issue of discrimination against the Sikhs. The logical culmination of this discourse was the organisation of Dharam Yudh Morcha in 1982 in partnership with Jarnail Singh Bhinderanwala, the militant Sikh religious leader. The Blue Star Operation in 1984 ended the Akali-Bhinderanwala association.

In the backdrop of Punjab politics, the Sikh identity is the most dominant orientation of the Akalis, as they derive their strength from the support of the Sikh masses. Who are these Sikhs? Is there any situation in which the Akalis have only confined its appeal to the Keshdhari and

Khalsa Sikhs by ignoring the Sehajdhari or the Patit Sikhs? There has been no evidence of any such attempt on the part of the Akalis to purge the Sehajdhari and Patit Sikhs. As a matter of fact, the Akalis approached the Sikhs as a Panth in terms of the most commonsensical criterion, that is, anybody who regarded herself/himself as a Sikh. Thus, the construction of Sikh identity was inclusive, in sharp contrast to its exclusive construction by the Akali Dal's as the power holder in SGPC.

After the militancy was over in 1993 and conditions began to turn normal, the political and social landscape of Punjab had radically altered. The Akali Dal began its pursuit of political power with the Moga Declaration (1996) much before the assembly elections approached in 1997, showing the political pragmatism of the party. In fact, since Moga Declaration, the party has shed its Panthic rhetoric and emphasised 'Punjabi' identity due to electoral compulsions and in order to widen its mass base, particularly to woo the Hindu youth. The party tended to come clear on its non-communal and development-oriented stance during the Moga conference. Its leaders, who had been emphasising that the party was the sole authentic representative of the Sikhs, now started talking in terms of Punjab and Punjabi identity and emphasised the 'secular' character of the Sikh religion, thought, and philosophy. The party did not give up its claims of being the authentic voice of the Sikhs, but now it stressed an 'inclusive' Punjabi identity; the party even opened its membership to non-Sikhs as well, unlike in the past when only 'pure Sikh' man or woman could become a member (Verma 1999). However, it is the same electoral compulsions to keep its Sikh voters within its camp that the President of the party (Sukhbir Singh Badal) has to get himself baptised. This again highlights the centrality of Khalsa identity as the true Sikh within the Panth. Thus, the Sikh identity, as might be true of other identities too, has become captive of inclusive as well as exclusive politics of the vested interests that often contradict the ground realities. However, to understand the politics of inclusion and exclusion there is a need to look into the twofold demographic dimensions that mark the existential basis of the Sikh community.

As regards the Sikh identity, the Sikh community can be divided into various categories: Khalsa (Amritdhari), Keshdhari, Sehajdhari, and Patit.[8] Among all these identities, the Khalsa constitutes a small minority (Gurharpal Singh 2000: 86) followed by the Keshdharis, who keep unshorn hair. The Sehajdharis constitute the largest among the Sikh and, as per the claims of the spokesman of the Sehajdhari Federation, they constitute 85 per cent of the total Sikh population (*The Indian Express*, Chandigarh, 21 November 2008: 4). It is not known if the size of the Patit Sikhs was ever estimated. Thus, less than 15 per cent of the total

Sikhs control the affairs of the Sikh community by defining and imposing the Sikh identity.

The second dimension of the Sikh community is caste differentiation. Despite the claims to the contrary (see Nabha 1973), there is caste hierarchy among the Sikhs (Judge 2005). However, the existence of castes' and caste hierarchy among the Sikhs should not be treated as coterminous with the Hindu caste hierarchy, which is a combination of ritual purity and political/economic power. It is for this reason that M.N. Srinivas' concept of 'dominant caste' (1987) is not applicable to the caste hierarchy among the Sikhs (Judge 2002). The demographic composition of various castes among the Sikhs is interesting in the sense that two-third of the Sikhs belong to the Jat caste.[9] The traditional occupation of the Jats is cultivation and even now they constitute the majority of owner-cultivators in Punjab. Ethene K. Marenco (1976) points out that, in colonial Punjab, Jat was one of those castes which experienced corporate mobility. The Jat Sikhs are predominantly settled in villages and they now dominate Punjab politics and control the state's agriculture.

The Jat Sikh is the backbone of the Akali politics and, b eing a peasant, is hardly interested in Sikh orthodoxy. It is the Sehajdharis and Patits who abound among the Jat Sikhs and, interestingly, they are largely and blissfully unconcerned with whether or not they are regarded as Sikhs of any variety by SGPC. Despite the political divisions among the Jats, they are the major source of votes for the Akalis. In a way, if the Jats as a caste community are provoked by the Akalis, the political life of the Akali Dal would come to an end. Fortunately, for the Akali Dal, there is no caste association among the Jat Sikhs, whereas the Jats of Haryana have very powerful Khap panchayats.

Despite all attempts at changing the definition of 'Sikh' to include or exclude persons from voting and/or contesting the SGPC elections, there has been no attempt on the part of the Akali leadership to issue a threat to the deviant members of the Sikh community. Obviously, that would be an end to the religious identity of the 85 per cent people claiming to be Sikhs. No religious leadership can afford to do so. The deviance of Jats is tolerated and their aspirations to get privileges as Sikhs are individually handled. Drawing legitimacy from the tradition, according,to which the present Khalsa form was ordained by the tenth Guru, it has been easy to handle crises.

However, the same Sikh leadership handles subaltern challenges with force, coercion, and intimidation. For example, Sant Piara Singh Bhaniarawala, belonging to the lower caste of the Sikhs, was castigated by SGPC and the Akal Takhat (Meeta and Rajivlochan 2007). Similar is

the case of Dera Sacha Sauda (see Baixas 2007; Ram 2007). Ronki Ram (*ibid.*) has explained the subaltern character of the Dera followers who are largely dalits and poor peasants. During the open conflict between the Akalis and the Dera followers, on being shown that the Dera chief Gurmit Ram Rahim Singh had shown disrespect to Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru, the Sikh masses vented their anger against the Dera chief. This was despite the fact that during the conflict, the media had also shown the Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister of Punjab[10] prostrating before the Dera chief, for seeking votes of his supporters in the assembly elections of 2007. The Dera chief had advised his followers to vote for the Congress party, as a consequence of which the Akali Dal lost more seats in the Malwa belt than was expected.

The above discussion raises a significant issue with regard to the construction of Sikh identity by the Sikh ecclesiastical and temporal leadership, which, nevertheless belong to the Akali party. Why do the Akalis construct two sets of Sikh identity in two different but inseparably linked settings? It seems logical to contest the exclusion of Sehajdhari Sikhs from benefits and privileges in terms of voting rights and fighting elections with respect to SGPC and admission to the SGPC-managed educational institutions. One of the major arguments given in the Sikh circles is that if anybody claiming to be Sikh gets benefits, then many Hindus would take advantage of the situation, particularly with regard to voting rights and contesting elections in SGPC. However, be it an elected body or educational institution, the competition is for some tangible gain or material benefits. Therefore, by insisting on 'pure' or true Sikh identity, the interested parties attempt at keeping their competitors, be it 'Hindus' or the 'deviants' within the community, at bay. It is a convenient way of achieving the desired benefits.

As far as Akali party is concerned, as explained earlier, in the political realm, its interest depends on inclusive identity, and it exhorts Sikhs, particularly the Jat peasantry, majority of whom might be 'deviants', to vote for the party in the name of Panth. At the same time, in ecclesiastical affairs it adopts exclusive rhetoric to compete with the orthodox groups in the community in order to keep its hold on the Sikh elected body that again serves the party's interests in both political and religious arenas. It is worth mentioning that the control over SGPC, which is the source of Akalis' economic and political power, is crucial for its political existence. In this regard Paul Wallace observes:

> Authority over the temples also provides access to what is probably the major political communication channel of the Sikh community. Religious and political communications are inextricably related in the *gurdwaras*,

just as the *Akal Takhat* in Amritsar symbolizes the inseparability of spiritual and temporal authority for the Sikh community (1981: 13).

Thus, in order to make sure that the control over SGPC remains in the hands of the Akali Dal the voters are restricted in the light of the orthodoxy, which was created through the construction of singular tradition. So far it has ensured the perpetuation of the enforcement and maintenance of the desired control over the gurdwaras. Consequently, one finds that the Sikh identity has become captive of this inclusive/exclusive politics of the Sikh leadership, which has failed to distinguish between the 'community' (a sociological reality) and the 'religion' (with its prerogative of orthodoxy). In the process, it has tried to define 'Sikh' in a uniform tradition that runs the risk of excluding a large number of individuals from its ambit. In practice, however, the leaders have adopted a flexible approach, depending upon their interests. It is the Sikh masses, which have remained at the receiving end. Moreover, their views and responses have never been sought on the issue of identity despite the fact that most of them participate as voters in SGPC elections.

Concluding Remarks

Defining 'Sikh' has always had political hues. Influenced by colonial modernism and for preserving the community's distinctness vis-à-vis other communities, the Sikh leadership of late 19th century attempted to relocate and demarcate boundaries by revisiting its history. But the political fallout of providing an exclusionary definition was also not completely lost sight of. Thus, the definition of Sikh identity fluctuated between exclusively defining 'Sikh' on the basis of 'unshorn hair' and inclusively defining it on the basis of 'faith'. This exercise was in itself crucial for defining Sehajdharis and their position in the community thereof.

This ambiguity could never be laid to rest in the post-colonial period also, with two different Acts – the Gurdwara Act, 1925 and the Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1971 – holding different positions in this regard, and due to the political considerations of one of the major parties (Akali Dal [Badal]) in the state of Punjab. Actually, it is due to the political considerations of the Akali Dal, that its position on Sikh identity swings between exclusiveness in SGPC and inclusiveness in political circles. About SGPC, one finds that, though founded as a religious body, due to its electoral nature and the participation of political parties and factions, directly or by proxy, it has turned out to be political in nature. At the same time, paradoxically, it is observed that the participation of various

political parties have withered away so far as the elections are concerned, which has jeopardised its 'democratic' nature. At present different shades and interest groups among the Akalis compete in the elections. There was time when communist leaders like Sohan Singh Josh were part of SGPC. In other words, it is reduced to being an elected body in which democratic spirit has disappeared.

The result is that, in order to accommodate divergent voices, the Akali Dal (Badal)-controlled SGPC takes exclusionary position, whereas in order to capture votes of the Punjabis in general and all classes and castes of Sikhs in particular the Akali Dal becomes inclusive in approach. Hence in the contemporary times it is this politics of exclusion and inclusion that has kept the Sikh leadership from an out-of-box thinking with regard to the 'Sikh identity' by distinguishing between 'religion' and 'community', in the larger interests of the Sikhs, in general.

However, with the changing social reality, the controversy over Sikh identity has entered the public sphere as never before, the implications of which may be in terms of the threat to the Sikh orthodoxy. The Sikh identity is being claimed in terms of faith, as is evident from the appeal to the court by the students who were denied admission in the medical institute. Such incidents are on the rise, as the aggrieved parties are bringing the issue to the public sphere.

Notes

1. The Khalsa identity involves unshorn hair and sporting of five 'Ks': *kesh*, unshorn hair; *kanga*, comb; *karha*, iron bangle; *kirpan*, sword; and *kachha*, long breeches.
2. Guru Gobind Singh, in his message to the then Mogul Emperor, wrote, 'When all the alternative means are exhausted, it is the moral right to pick the sword.' The message written in Persian was later published as Zafarnama. Zafarnama is part of Dasam Granth, which includes all the writings of Guru Gobind Singh (the tenth guru) and of other contemporary sages. As regards its sacred status, Dasam Granth is next only to Guru Granth Sahib.
3. Amritdhari is a baptised Sikh who maintains five 'Ks'; Keshdhari is a Sikh who keeps unshorn hair, but is not baptised; Sehajdhari is a Sikh who does not keep unshorn hair, but claims to be a Sikh; and Patit Sikh is one who has violated the Sikh principles by committing one or other *kurahits* (wrong doings). The Sikh Gurduwara Act, 1925 has identified four *kurahits*: 'cutting the hair, using tobacco, committing adultery, and eating meat that has not come from an animal killed with a single blow.' (cited in Kashmir Singh 1989: 349-50; see also Navkiran Singh (2004: 42-43).
4. In the Sikh diaspora, the term *Icchadhari* is used for the 'clean-shaven' Sikhs – *iccha* literally means desire or free choice. The term *Bikhidhari* is used for an *Amritdhari*

Sikh who has committed a *kurahit*. Since *bikh* literally means poison, *Bikh-dhari* implies that one has taken 'poison' by forsaking the life of *amrit* ('nectar').
5. The Sikh Gurdwaras Act was a modification of the Sikh Gurdwara and Shrines Act, 1922. Its jurisdiction extended to the British Indian Punjab, but excluded princely states in the province. The Act was amended time and again after 1947. There are separate acts for gurdwaras in Nanded (Maharashtra), Delhi, and Jammu and Kashmir.
6. Online information for the year 2002 was cited from *The Tribune* (Chandigarh), 31 March 2002; for 2005, from *The Panthic Weekly* (Kingsburg CA, online magazine <http://www.panthic.org>), 3 April 2005. The estimate for 2009 is based on the discussion with Varinder Walia, special correspondent, *The Tribune*.
7. The stories of the martyrdom of Akalis in various struggles validate such a metaphor (see Sahni [nd] and Mohinder Singh [2000] for details).
8. Gurharpal Singh (2000) mentions Mona Sikh as an identity, which, according to the categories discussed in this article, may be covered under Patit Sikhs. Pashaura Singh (2004) christens such a category as Bikhidhari.
9. Gurharpal Singh's view that the Jat Sikhs constitute 80 per cent of the total Sikh community (2000) appears to be an exaggeration. Since all such estimates are based on the 1931 Census, two-third or above 60 per cent would be realistic.
10. The Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal is the son of the Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal.

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The Collective Family and Migration Capital: Women Workers in Bengaluru's Garment Industry

Narendar Pani and *Nikky Singh*

> As the debate on the family in India has developed a greater focus on practice, there has been a need to understand the vast diversity of this institution. While such an emphasis on detail is essential, it also tends to take attention away from more comprehensive concepts that are needed to understand processes that cover different types of families. Among these processes is the role the family plays in migration. In this paper we use a field view of the households of women working in Bengaluru's garment industry to develop concepts of collective households and collective families. We then use a modified version of the concept of migration capital to argue that collective families play a critical role in the process of migration, cutting across the economic, the social and the cultural.

The debate on the nature of the family in India is an old and still continuing one. At one level, the debate has been over whether the Indian family is moving from being a joint family to a nuclear one, with some sociologists speaking of the myth of disintegration of the joint family (Patel 2005). At another, it has been a question of whether the idea of a Hindu joint family itself owes more to texts than to actual practice. The shift in focus to what actually exists in the field has been accompanied by a desire for greater conceptual rigour. This has resulted in increased attention being paid to the household. The variation across households had led to several household-classification schemes being 'devised by sociologists to enable them to capture with greater precision the multiple

forms of household composition and the dynamics of household change in India' (Uberoi 2003: 1070). Su ch a fo cus on the specifics is u n-doubtedly essential for a meaningful study of the household especially when dealing with as diverse a social reality as exists in India. Yet, in our search for detail, we could focus so much on the differences that we ignore common patterns. This can be a major weakness when studying processes like migration where families that are diverse in many other ways follow similar patterns. Such processes can be better understood if we develop concepts that are comprehensive rather than being focused entirely on capturing specific variations.

In this paper we argue that the critical role the Indian family plays in migration can be better understood with the help of a fresh conceptual-isation of at least some aspects of the Indian family. The case for such a fresh conceptualisation becomes evident if, going beyond existing texts, we take what M.N. Srinivas called a 'field view'[1] of the Indian family. We begin with such a view of the families of women workers in Bengaluru's garment export industry. The patterns that emerge from that view lead us to develop the concepts of 'collective households' and 'collective families'. We then go on to examine the role played by the collective family in the process of migration by using a modified version of the concept of 'migration capital'.

The Migrant Woman Worker Household in Bengaluru

Popular imaginations of Bengaluru are dominated by the city's role in the global information technology industry. Its other industries, including its once-dominant public sector, rarely get the same attention. It is then easy to miss the fact that one of the largest employers in the city is its garment export industry. Beginning in the 1970s, the industry has grown rapidly even during the period of the information technology revolution. The largest garment export company in the city employed 45,000 workers in 2008 and the industry also had other large employers (Gokaldas Exports Limited 2008). This industry suits the purpose of this paper for two reasons. First, an overwhelming number of the workers in this industry were women, allowing us to take a gender sensitive view of the role of the family. And second, a vast majority of the women workers in the garment export industry were migrants. And their stories were more often than not linked to the larger story of the migration of the woman and her family from her village to the city.

The field view presented here is based on our larger study of globalisation and women workers in the industry. The study used a stratified cluster sample to generate quantitative data and then sought to

confirm and explain the findings with qualitative interviews. The importance of the migrant worker in this case can be seen from the fact that just a little over a quarter of the women workers in the industry had been in Bengaluru for over fifteen years, while 55 per cent had been in the city for five years or less, and 16 per cent for a year or less (see Table 1). While the garment export industry as a whole in Bengaluru had a prominent place for new entrants into the city, the pattern was much stronger in the belt between the south and the west of the city, where the garment industries were concentrated, than it was elsewhere in the city. Nearly 64 per cent of the women workers in this belt had been in the city for five years or less and less than 18 per cent had been in it for more than fifteen years. Outside this belt, on the other hand, the percentage of women workers who had been in the city for five years or less was around 35 per cent and over 47 per cent had been in the city for fifteen years or more.

Table 1: Distribution of women workers by years they have resided in Bengaluru

Residence	Years in Bengaluru				
	1 or less	1 to 5	5 to 10	10 to 15	More than 15
Within garment belt	18.5	45.4	14.4	4.5	17.2
Outside Garment belt	10.4	25.1	12.3	4.7	47.4
Total	16.0	39.1	13.8	4.5	26.5

Note: Figures in percentages. The category 'More than 15' includes those who have stated Bengaluru as their 'native place'. Rows need not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

The attraction of this industry for migrants appeared to have been influenced to a considerable degree by distance. A vast majority of them came from what could be called an extended vicinity of the city. The regions that supplied workers to the garment export industry in Bengaluru generally fell within a radius of 250 km from the city. As a result, close to 60 per cent of the women workers came from Bengaluru Rural and other districts of Karnataka.

Bhagyamma came from a Vokkaliga family in Jinklé village near Bhadravati in Shimoga district of Karnataka. Her mother had been married as a child and moved to Mandya district, her father's 'native place'. Bhagyamma's father had died when she was a child and her mother had then moved back to Jinklé. Bhagyamma's wedding was arranged by relatives from her father's side who knew her husband's family in Hassan. Twenty days after she gave birth to her second child, another girl, her husband had left her because he had wanted a son. 'He

married again,' she said and added, 'even then he was unable to have a son.' She visited her in-laws once every few years in Hassan and hoped that once her husband, an alcoholic, passed away she would get his share (around two acres) of the yet undivided land. 'Why should I let go of it?', she asked assertively.

The challenge of migration for Bhagyamma was predominantly one of moving from a rural to an urban ethos. For eleven years she worked as a casual labourer in Bhadravati in Shimoga district of Karnataka, being paid Rs 16 a day when she started and Rs 30 a day by the time she left. She had managed to get work almost every day, although the place of work had kept changing. Her mother had looked after her two daughters while she worked. The sister of a friend, who worked with her, once visited their village. She had come from Bengaluru and told Bhagyamma that she should consider moving to the city since she was working so hard for so little money, and had two children to look after. Convinced, Bhagyamma and her friend took the train to Bengaluru soon after, reaching the latter's sister's place in Heggenahalli Cross, Peenya.

Bhagyamma stayed with her friend's sister for a month. She was not expected to contribute towards the expenses in any way. After having arranged for another place, she went back to the village and brought her daughters and mother with her. She found employment in a sari factory close to her home, for Rs 900 a month. When she had worked there for about a year and a half, one of her daughters fell ill and needed to be operated upon. Bhagyamma quit her job, vacated the house, and went back to Bhadravati for a month for the medical treatment. She returned to Bengaluru alone, and this time stayed with a relative who had married in the city. After a week, she found a tin-sheet-roofed house for a rent of Rs 500 a month in the area. Her daughters and mother joined her in a month. The city had been her home over the four years since then.

The specifics of Bhagyamma's case throw up a variety of issues, ranging from those relating to gender relations to factors in the workplace, such as her reasons for leaving a job. What is of interest to this paper is the role played by the household in aiding her migration. It is now widely accepted that the study of the household provides a useful analytical tool in understanding the family. The household, defined as being commensal and co-resident, provides us an empirically verifiable category around which we can build other dimensions of a family. There are situations where the composition of the household itself is an indication of the relationships between its members. The role of the household in migration is one of such situation. The composition of a household can also be an indication of just how welcome migrants are in a household. Households that have place for distant relatives or friends

can be said to provide greater support to migration than those that have place for no more than a nuclear family. Bhagyamma's case brings out the flexibility of the household in terms of its ability to provide place for migrants. This place was provided not just for family but also for friends. Indeed, in her first migration into the city she was no more than a friend of a sister of a member of the household in which she first stayed.

Bhagyamma's experience as a 'friend' was also not an extreme exception. Around 14 per cent of the members of the households of workers (excluding the workers themselves) were termed 'friends'. It is important to note though that not all these 'friends' were staying with families. There were the odd cases of contractors from the neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh bringing young women workers to the city and crowding them into hostel-like accommodation. There were also instances where a small group of women workers could decide to set up a household themselves. Shobha from Mandya district was 19 years old. Her father had passed away when she was in Class III. As her mother's brother looked after their land she was able to continue studying. After Shobha finished her second year PUC (Pre-University Course, Class XII), she stayed at home for two months. But she feared that if she 'sat at home' any longer, her family would get her married. Her *dodappa's* (father's elder brother's) son, who she referred to as her brother, had been in Bengaluru for four years. When he visited Mandya, she accompanied him back to his home in Peenya in Bengaluru. He had recently got married and both he and his wife worked in the garment industry: he was a supervisor, and his wife a checker. It was on their suggestion that Shobha found a job in a garment factory as well. Shobha's independent spirit then took her a step further. When her male cousin refused to let her share the household expenses, she decided to move out. She made some friends at the factory, who were in a similar situation, and four of them got together and rented a place. She insisted that the only reason she decided to leave her cousin's place was that she did not want to become a burden on him.

Shobha's case points to the difference in the household options available to the married and the unmarried woman worker. The option of setting up a separate household with co-workers was clearly not available to her newly wed sister-in-law. Shobha's decision to set up her own house was, of course, not the norm. But, even if we acknowledge that most unmarried women workers were not willing to use their options the way Shobha did, there was another more common reason to make a distinction between the households of married women workers and those of unmarried ones in the specific context of women workers in Bengaluru's garment industry. A vast majority of these women were

young with just around two per cent being over 40. years old. The married women workers' cases thus provide a picture of young households. The unmarried women workers, on the other hand, still tended to live predominantly with their parents. Their cases thus tended to provide a picture of households where those in control were older. We would then be able to capture the effects of the age of those in control of a household on approaches to migration if we look at the households of married women workers separately from those of unmarried women workers. ·

When exploring the role of households in the process of migration across these two broad groups we would need to use a classification that reflects the openness of a household to migrants. In the process of using the household as a conceptual basis for understanding the family, scholars have come up with a variety of detailed classifications, such as that of Pauline Kolenda (1968). Of the several classifications that the literature offers, the role of the household in migration is probably best captured by beginning with the distinction made by A.M. Shah (1973) between simple and complex households. Following this tradition, Lancy Lobo considers a simple household as one consisting 'of a whole or a part of the parental family, meaning a unit of man, his wife, and their unmarried children (that is, nuclear or elementary family). The households composed of more than one parental family, or one or more other parental families are considered "complex"' (2005: 272). The term 'complex' has, in practise, been used to refer to a variety of non-nuclear families. In the case of migration, though, friends can also play a crucial role in providing an initial household for the migrant. We could, technically speaking, extend the idea of parts of different parental families staying together to include friends, who could be treated as individual members of different parental families. But such an extension may go against the spirit of the concept of the household in family studies, where it is often treated as 'one of the several dimensions of the family' (*ibid.:* 269). When looking at complex households that also have place for friends we may then be better off using another term. In this paper we use the term 'collective households' to refer such households.

The concept of 'collective households' is necessarily an umbrella one. It puts together complex households consisting of family members alone together with those consisting of 'friends'. Within these two categories too there can be a wide range of households. Studies using the concept of complex households have listed the various forms they can take as they could consist of a variety of combinations of members of a family. Lobo (*ibid.:* 273-74) lists four specific compositions of complex households in his study of families in Dhoria and still finds it necessary

to point to those with atypical compositions. The category of 'friends' too can consist of a wide range of households, ranging from those brought together by a contractor to others with more voluntary arrangements. Classifying empirical data on the different kinds of collective households would then leave us with a very wide range of possibilities.

Such a detailed listing, however, would tend to hurt rather than help our understanding of the common role played by these different types of collective households in the process of migration. Instead of going into a detailed classification we would be better served by focusing entirely on the extent to which the composition of a household suggests its willingness to provide place for migrants. We could then limit our classification of collective households in terms of whether they have place only for close relatives, or have place even for distant relatives and friends. The precise dividing line between these two types of households is not beyond debate. There is bound to be some scope for disagreement on the point at which we separate what we can consider a close relative from what we term a distant one.

The difficulties in identifying a precise dividing line, however, cannot be said to outweigh the need to distinguish between households that are open to a wide range of migrants and those that are not. We could then make do with a less than perfect dividing line. In this paper we make a distinction between what can be called, for want of a better term, the immediate family and others. The immediate family in this paper consists of brothers, sisters, father, mother, father-in-law, and mother-in-law. The residual category consisting of all others would include all other relatives, friends, and would also cover friends staying together. We could then classify households into three categories: (i) the nuclear family consisting of all or some members of a nuclear family, (ii) the immediate family; and (iii) 'others'.

When we take these definitions to the households of the married women workers in Bengaluru's garment export industry, we find that close to 40 per cent of their households had members who were not a part of the nuclear family. Thus, while a simple majority of the households of married women workers consisted of the whole or parts of a nuclear family alone, the proportion that had others staying with them was not small. If we move beyond the household to the family as a whole, several of the nuclear families in the city did prefer to leave their children with their parents in the village. An urban nuclear household could then be a part of a non-nuclear family, with the rural non-nuclear household providing such basic family functions as the care and nurturance of the young.

The non-nuclear household in the city was not simply a matter of better-off households being able to accommodate more members. The percentage of non-nuclear households among those of married women workers did not vary very much across living conditions. A case can be made in Bengaluru to take the sheet-roof houses and the reinforced-concrete-roof houses as proxies for two quite different sets of living conditions. Both sets of households had place for persons who did not belong to the nuclear family. If 38 per cent of the poorer sheet-roof houses had place for persons not belonging to the nuclear family, the same was the case with 40 per cent of the reinforced-concrete-roof houses (see Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution of households of married women workers by type of household and roof type

Roof type	Type of household			
	Nuclear family	Nuclear + immediate family	Nuclear + 'others'	Nuclear + immediate family + 'others'
Sheet	62.0	28.6	4.2	5.2
Concrete	59.8	26.5	6.0	7.7
All	61.0	28.2	4.8	6.0

Note: Figures in percentages.

There seemed to be some broadly defined capacity of the household of a married woman worker to absorb members. Small nuclear families of these workers seemed more inclined to take in additional members of their immediate family and more distant relatives than the larger nuclear families. Thus, the overall size of these households tended to remain constant at between 3.8 and 3.9 members irrespective of whether it consisted of the nuclear family alone, or included the immediate family (see Table 3). It was the smallest nuclear families that felt the need to take on even 'others'. The households that had the nuclear family staying with 'others', without members of the immediate family, had an average of only 3.5 members. There would thus appear to be some optimal size that households tended to gravitate to. What was considered a viable family size appeared to be determined by a variety of factors, both economic and non-economic.

Roopa's house was small but it was considered large enough to accommodate more than the nuclear family. The house was the second in a set of four houses, two on either side separated by a passage, in the centre of which was a staircase going up to the owner's house. Every two houses shared a toilet. Yet, even as one entered the house, they appeared

Table 3: Distribution of households of married women workers by type of household and size of household

Type of household	Average household size	Household size		
		1 to 4 members	5 to 8 members	9 to 12 members
Nuclear	3.94	71.4	27.6	1.0
Nuclear plus immediate family	3.77	73.4	25.5	1.1
Nuclear plus 'others'	3.50	81.3	18.8	0.0
Nuclear plus immediate family plus 'others'	3.80	70.0	30.0	0.0
All married women worker households	3.86	72.4	26.7	0.9

Note: Figures in percentages. Rows of each type of household across household size need not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

very comfortable with the space available. Roopa sat on the bed next to one of the researchers, and her husband sat in the corner of the bed, behind her. Roopa's mother who was visiting from the village, sat on the floor right next to the TV; her sister, Parvathi, who had moved to the city about a month ago, and was staying with them, sat next to her mother, while her husband, Roopa's brother in law, stood behind Roopa and her husband. Roopa's two daughters, and her sister's daughter, kept running in and out of the house.

The decision to share the household could have also had an economic basis. Moving into the reinforced concrete roof house had been expensive. They also had to pay for electricity and they had cooking gas. They also had a water tap inside their house. In addition, since the water that came in the tap was not potable, they also bought water for drinking and cooking purposes for one rupee a *bindige* (a large pot) and generally needed around two *bindige*s a day. Even this rudimentary improvement in their lifestyle was possible because the sister and her husband contributed to household expenses.

There were also other advantages to be had with members of the immediate family or others staying in the household. It could mean there were more women to carry out the household chores. Despite the increase in housework for the household as a whole, it could help reduce the burden on each woman. It provided access to the instruments owned by any one member of the larger household. This is most evident in the case of access to mobile phones (see Table 4). As high as 57 per cent of the married women with 'others' staying with them had access to a family mobile phone. The economic benefits of cost-sharing also seemed

to allow an increasing number of these women to own their own phones. While only 10 per cent of the women workers in nuclear family households had their own personal mobile phones, this number increased to 16 per cent for households with immediate family, 21 per cent for households with 'others', and 25 per cent for households with both immediate family and 'others'.

Table 4: Distribution of households of married women workers by access to mobile phones and types of household

Type of household	Access to mobile phones			
	None	Personal	Family	Friends
Nuclear	47.0	10.4	40.2	2.4
Nuclear plus immediate family	46.8	15.6	33.8	3.9
Nuclear plus 'others'	14.3	21.4	57.1	7.1
Nuclear plus immediate family as well as 'others'	43.8	25.0	31.3	0.0
All married women households	45.0	13.3	38.7	3.0

Note: Figures in percentages. Rows need not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Even as the pressures of living in the city opened up the household to individuals who were not members of the nuclear family, the nature of the family relationship continued to influence the persons who stayed in the household. In sharing the household there was clearly a preference in the homes of the married women workers for the immediate family over more distant relatives and friends. Around 28 per cent of the households were shared only with the immediate family. If we add the nearly 6 per cent of households which were shared both with immediate family and 'others', the shared households were predominantly cases of living with the immediate family. Cases of sharing a household with 'others' alone accounted for less than 5 per cent of the households of married women workers.

Even among the immediate family, there was sometimes a sense of extended temporariness about the arrangements. This was particularly true in cases where the younger siblings of either the husband or the wife were brought into the household with the purpose of helping them gain a foothold in the city. The foothold was not just in economic terms. 'He's doing very well', Ratna said proudly of her younger brother. Being the youngest, Ratna's parents had made sure that he studied well and even took loans for that purpose. When he first came to Bengaluru to do his Bachelor of Business Management, he hated the city. He got very

homesick and returned to the village. A big landlord in the village promised him work, but never gave him a job. When he had stayed un-employed in the village for a while, his father convinced him to return to the city. He then finished his Master of Business Administration course privately and worked in the accounting section of a private company earning Rs 8,000 a month. He had now set his sights higher and was trying to get into Wipro or some other big information technology company. But, despite her obvious fondness for her brother, it was quite clear that he would have to move out once he got married. They were, in fact, looking to get him married and settle him into an independent house the next year.

This additional responsibility of taking care of the relatives that stayed in the household could even contribute, oddly enough, to the preference of some workers for nuclear family households. 'I'm very nice and warm to everyone', Pramila Bai said, 'but I don't want any additional responsibility'. She had been distancing herself from her relatives. She had not gone back to her village since her mother passed away five years earlier. 'I don't want to get into any fights', she said. 'They're most welcome to come and spend the day and then leave.' No one from the village had ever stayed with them while moving to the city. 'I don't want to take responsibility for anybody. If they stay with me and on the pretext of going to the temple or cinema, go somewhere else, I'll be the one answerable. If they don't return where can I go looking for them? I've seen it happen around me enough times,' she said.

The extension of familial responsibility beyond the nuclear family may generate images of a revival of the traditional Hindu joint family. But the limits of that classification to an analysis of the role of the family in migration are not difficult to spot. The literature on the joint family has given the term a number of specific connotations, including those related to honour in a feudal society, that may not necessarily be entirely relevant to the question of the role of the family in the process of migration. Instead, factors such as sharing costs as well as the need for women workers to share the homemakers' burden may well play a far more important role. We could, of course, stretch the term 'joint family' to take this variation into account as well. The potential of the Indian joint family for 'structural adaptation' has been noted much earlier by Milton Singer (1968). But Singer has been criticised for a lack of precision in his definitions of 'nuclear' and 'joint' families (see Uberoi 2003: 1068). And, in the context of migration, the classification of nuclear and joint leaves little or no room for the category of 'friends'. Any attempt to identify these shared households with the traditional, and disputed, notion of Hindu joint families could then be quite misleading.

Nothing brings this out clearer than the fact that it is not the Hindu households of married women workers alone that are most prone to sharing their household (see Table 5). While nearly 40 per cent of the households of Hindu married women workers were shared, this figure was higher for Christian households at over 54 per cent. It was the married Muslim women workers that showed a clear preference for the nuclear family.

Table 5: Distribution of households of married women workers by type of household and religion

Religion	Type of household			
	Nuclear family	Nuclear plus immediate family	Nuclear plus 'others'	Nuclear plus immediate family plus 'others'
Hindu	60.4	27.4	5.6	6.6
Muslim	82.6	17.4	0.0	0.0
Christian	45.5	50.0	0.0	4.5
All religions	61.0	28.2	4.8	6.0

Note: Figures in percentages. Rows need not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

Najma was a typical case of a Muslim married woman in a nuclear family household as she lived with her husband and four children: twin daughters and two sons. She was the youngest of four sisters and four brothers. Others in her family too seemed to prefer a nuclear family household, as was evident from her eldest sister, a widow, living in a separate household nearby. Her sister owned a small flour mill from which she made anywhere from Rs 100 to Rs 200 a day. All of Najma's brothers were auto-rickshaw drivers, taking after their father.

Being a nuclear family meant the entire burden of running the home was on Najma. There were the occasional signs that she might have been finding it difficult to cope. Her house opened onto a tin-sheet-covered courtyard shared by three houses. There were a few buckets with clothes soaked in water, lying just outside the door. The clothesline had a few clothes drying. The living room of the house was dark, as there was no window, and a dim bulb was the only source of light. There was no furniture except for one plastic chair on which her husband was sitting as he watched television. The bedroom was right behind the living room. The tube-light in this small room made it look well lit. The room hardly had space to walk as it had a huge double bed, on the extreme left of which was a huge pile of what looked like clothes and bed linen wrapped in cloth bundles. In the front left-hand corner of the room was a wooden cabinet with a glass opening for the upper portion, through which could

be seen glasses and tea cups of many kinds. The lower portion of the cabinet was covered by flaps. Next to this was a plastic chair; beyond it was a grey steel *almirah* with a long mirror on the outer side of its left door, which was covered by a half-drawn curtain. When Najma opened it later during the course of our conversation, one could see that it was stacked with clothes: folded saris and *salwar kameezes* and had many men's shirts hanging. On both sides of the room were small lofts upon which were kept some boxes, trunks and sacks. Right behind the bedroom was a door that led into the kitchen. Only the kitchen had a sheet covering it, with the rest of the house having a reinforced concrete roof. There was a gap between the two sheets that acted as a roof over the kitchen that let rainwater in during the monsoon. On top of a slab almost touching the roof of the kitchen, were lined many shining steel utensils of all sizes. The kitchen floor was divided into two by a small partition – about a foot long – beyond which was a frighteningly large pile of unwashed utensils in what also served as the bathing area. Clearly Najma's daily task was cut out as she maintained her house in addition to the work in the garment factory.

The fact that most married women workers in the garment industry were young must not lead us to assume that the nature of their households was necessarily a break from the past. We can get a picture of older households by looking at those of the unmarried women workers, as these workers typically lived with their parents. When defining nuclear families in relation to unmarried workers, we are, of course, looking at the family of origin and not procreation. As a result, the nuclear family of unmarried women workers would then be the parents of the workers and *their* children, that is, the woman worker's father, mother, brothers, and sisters. The immediate family then included the cousins, uncles, aunts, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nephews, nieces, the grandmothers, and the grandfathers.

There were the odd cases where unmarried women workers did have an influence on the households, leading to arrangements within the home that suggested different generations living in the same space. Ajantha was one of the few unmarried young women workers whose dress was closer in fashion to the garments they made for the western world. Her printed pyjamas and a blouse to match may have been from the stocks rejected by the importer. She lived with her sister and mother in a single room. Plastic and steel vessels were stacked in the kitchen area of the room. There was a double bed on the left hand side of the room and a television facing it. Plastic chairs were kept on the right hand side. There was a poster on the wall behind the bed with a forest scene and a pair of doves and a red heart that said, 'Love is all there is.' On the wall on the

right were hung garlanded and framed pictures of various gods and goddesses. But most of the households of unmarried women workers followed the norms set by the parents.

A comparison of the households of the married women workers with those of the older households of unmarried ones suggests that the tendency to open the household to persons other than the nuclear family was not a recent phenomenon. Indeed, there seems to have been some stability to this figure with households headed by the older generation following a similar pattern to that of the younger generation. Households consisting of nuclear families alone accounted for virtually the same proportion — just over 60 per cent – of the older households, that is, those of the parents of unmarried workers, as was the case with the younger households of the married women workers. But the patterns of the households of the married women workers and those of the unmarried women workers were not identical.

The most striking difference between the households of the married women workers and those of the unmarried ones was among the Muslims (see Table 6). The tendency for Muslim married women workers to belong to households consisting of the nuclear family alone did become much less pronounced in the households of unmarried Muslim women workers. The preference for nuclear family households among the households of the unmarried Muslim women workers was at levels much closer to that of the overall average, accounting for 65 per cent of the households compared to the overall average across religions of 62 per cent.

Table 6: Distribution of households of unmarried women workers by type of household and religion

Religion	Type of household			
	Nuclear family	Nuclear plus immediate family	Nuclear plus 'others'	Nuclear plus immediate family plus 'others'
Hindu	60.7	25.8	11.8	1.7
Muslim	65.0	26.7	8.3	0.0
Christian	61.1	33.3	5.6	0.0
All religions	61.6	26.4	10.7	1.3

Note: Figures in percentages. Rows need not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

The greater preference for a household consisting of the nuclear family alone among married Muslim women workers compared to the unmarried ones may well have had a great deal to do with the decision to work itself. This community was less inclined to let their women work

after marriage. And the husband's decision to allow – or force – his wife to work could mean having to leave the joint family. Najma's husband was the first from his family to live separately. He was also from Bengaluru and had five brothers and three sisters. The brothers lived along with her in-laws as a joint family close to their house. One brother-in-law was a tailor in a shop, one an auto-rickshaw driver, one a manager in an airport taxi service, and yet another brother was in Saudi Arabia. All of Najma's sisters-in-law did not work outside the home. Her husband had also lived there earlier, but left later. Najma said it was his decision to set up his own business that led to his leaving the house. But it was not clear whether it was the business itself or the fact that she had to work to support his effort at entrepreneurship that had forced the split. In any case, such details were not discussed with the women of the house. When asked if all the brothers in her husband's family had shared household expenses, Najma said women would not be told all those details. '*Hum tak woh sab pahaunchta nahin*' (All that information doesn't reach us), she said in the local version of Urdu.

The difference between the married and unmarried workers in their preference for households that have space for more than the nuclear family is also found in the case of Telugu and Tamil workers. The households of the Telugu and Tamil married women workers follow a pattern very similar to that of the industry as a whole. The percentage of nuclear family households among married women workers who had migrated from the neighbouring states of Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu was at around 64 per cent, only a little higher than the overall average of 61 per cent (see Table 7). But this was not true for unmarried women workers migrating from the two states. Unmarried women workers whose 'native place' was in Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu were much less likely to live in households consisting only of their parents' nuclear family. While 62 per cent of unmarried women workers as a whole stayed in their parents' nuclear families, this proportion dropped to 49 per cent of unmarried workers from Andhra Pradesh. It fell even lower to 46 per cent in the case of unmarried women workers from Tamil Nadu.

One reason for this difference in the preference for the nuclear family between the married and unmarried women workers in these two language groups could be the patterns of migration. In the case of married women, typically, the husband first migrated to the city and found a job and a place to stay. After he was settled, in that he could afford to rent his own house, even a sheet-roof one, his wife joined him. The household then consisted only of the nuclear family until they were established enough to invite other relatives to stay with them.

Table 7: Distribution of households of women workers by types of households
and 'native place'

Native place	Households of married women workers				Households of unmarried women workers			
	N	N + I	N + 'O'	N + I + 'O'	N	N + I	N + 'O'	N + I + 'O'
Bengaluru city	59.7	29.9	3.0	7.5	68.3	23.8	7.9	0.0
Rest of Karnataka	60.5	27.3	5.4	6.8	64.4	22.6	10.7	2.3
Andhra Pradesh	64.3	32.1	3.6	0.0	48.7	38.5	12.8	0.0
Tamil Nadu	63.6	27.3	6.1	3.0	46.2	42.3	11.5	0.0
All regions	61.0	28.2	4.8	6.0	61.6	26.4	10.7	1.3

Note: N = Nuclear; N + I = Nuclear + Immediate; N + 'O' = Nuclear + 'Others'; N + I +
'O' = Nuclear + Immediate + 'Others'. Figures in percentages. The part of the rows for
married women and that for unmarried women need not add up to 100 due to rounding
off.

Unmarried women workers, on the other hand, were often part of a
larger migration. As a part of this process, they often had to stay not just
with other members of their parents' nuclear family, but also with the
relatives or friends their family had moved in with. When Jyothi migrated
to Bengaluru with her parents from Gorantla in Anantpur district of
Andhra Pradesh they moved directly to her *chikkamma*'s (mother's
younger sister's) place where they stayed for a year and a half. Other
phenomena like contractors bringing in young unmarried women workers
to serve the garment industry in Bengaluru also created households that
were beyond the nuclear and, indeed, any other form of family.

The composition of the households of the married and unmarried
women workers was thus not identical for Muslims as well as migrants
from the neighbouring states of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. But
these differences were not substantial enough to make a significant
difference to the overall pattern. The overall pattern was that a majority
of the households did consist of the nuclear family – or parts of a nuclear
family – alone; that is, the nuclear family of the married woman worker
or the nuclear family of the parents of the unmarried women workers.
Yet there was a significant presence of households that also had members
who were not a part of the nuclear family. Since the size of the house-
holds did not vary very much across the nuclear and the non-nuclear, the
households may have had a tendency to grow to a viable size. This would
have been particularly true when the demands of city living required
more than one nuclear family alone to provide the finances as well as the
women to take care of the home. There was also enough evidence of the

households playing the role of an effective first base for migrants seeking a future in the city.

The Collective Household and the Collective Family

In exploring the relationship between the collective household and the family we would do well to keep in mind T.N. Madan's advice that 'we must be careful to precisely identify which particular level or what particular dimension [of a family] is supposed to be affected by the processes of change under consideration' (Madan 1994: 421). When identifying the specific levels at which a family operates the framework provided by Madan can be useful, though it is based only on the Hindu family. Madan takes the view that

> the Hindu family generally operates at four different levels: (i) as a household; (ii) as a grouping of households constituting a property-group; (iii) as a still wider grouping of households incorporating the coparcenary which defines the outer limits for allodial and obligatory ritual purposes; (iv) as an all encompassing dispersed grouping defined genealogically rather than in terms of active interaction' (*ibid.:* 420-21).

To this framework, our data suggests, we would do well to add two more considerations. First, it would be useful to identify the nuclear family as some form of a core group. And second, we need to find place for the category of 'friends' when dealing with the role of the household in migration. There can of course be a considerable overlap between these categories. Nuclear families would, for instance, typically be just a part of the property group. But, moving from the smallest category to the largest, we can depict this framework as a series of concentric circles from the nuclear family to the larger property group to the still larger coparcenary group to an even larger all-encompassing dispersed genealogical grouping and finally to a larger circle of possible friends. Each individual household could then cover one or more of these categories. The picture is captured in Figure 1. The household could consist of a part of a nuclear family alone; it could have members of the nuclear family and a larger property group; it could have members from the larger family right up to those who were, prior to migration, only a part of a genealogical grouping; it could have members of different components of a family staying with friends; or it could even have just friends staying together. Other than the households consisting of the nuclear family alone, or parts of a nuclear family alone, all other households would be collective households. These collective households could then be grouped into three categories: (i) *collective family households* that are composed

of parts or the whole of the nuclear family along with members of the larger family, (ii) *collective non-family households* that are composed of non-family members alone, and (iii) *collective family-cum-non-family households* that are composed of parts or the whole of the nuclear family along with members of the larger family together with non-family members.

Figure 1: Households and migration
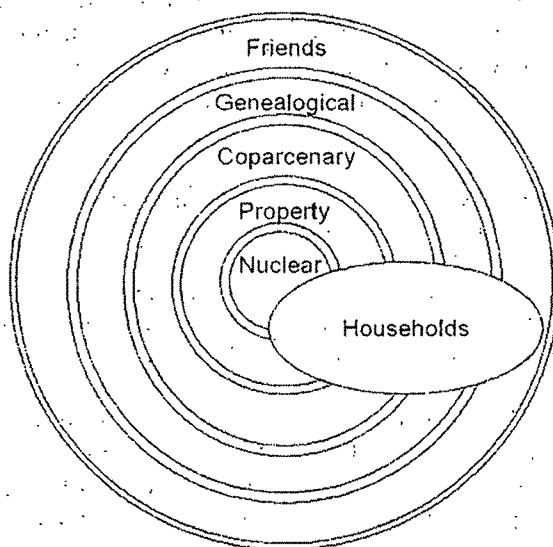
Each of these types of households reflects a different potential to be a cog in the wheel of migration. The collective households as a whole have revealed a greater potential to aid migration than the households that consist of parts or the whole of a nuclear family alone. But the potential to aid migration could also vary across the different types of collective households. The collective family-cum-non-family households have revealed a greater potential to help migrants than the collective family households. And the collective non-family households are likely to have a different potential: while they may be open to a broad category of 'friends', these households, by their very nature, could be more temporary arrangements.

The relationship between the collective household and the family could also take different forms. We could treat as a collective family any family that has at least one collective household within it, other than a non-family collective household. A collective family could then have

collective family households within it or collective family-cum-non-family households within it, or both. There may also be other differences that are worth noting such as those between an urban collective household and the rural one. It is important to note that, even from the point of view of migration, the rural collective household could play an important role. For instance, when the husband migrates first to the city leaving his wife in his parents' household in the village, or when both husband and wife migrate to the city leaving their child in the care of either set of parents' households, it is the rural collective household that provides the support system for migration.

Family and its Migration Capital

An analysis of the role the household plays in migration would be very limited if it is confined to its composition. As Shah's work makes clear, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that 'the household is the site for play of some of the deepest emotions and sentiments in human life' (1998: 2). The role of relationships between members of a household is at least as important as its composition itself. A collective family household that had place for distant relatives was bound to influence the role of the family in migration in several ways. In its simplest form, it was a case of a woman marrying into a family in the city. But the more frequent form was that of a family migrating from their village into the city. A migrating nuclear family could all move at one time or the husband could come first, the wife later, and sometimes the children even later. The main facilitator of this process from within the city was the collective family. The migrant workers moved into the house of a relative or friend in the city for varying periods of time and with different arrangements regarding the sharing of household costs. And the support was not just in the form of urban households supporting migrants from the village. The rural household also played a supportive role by keeping members of the migrant family – usually the wife or child – until they were able to move in with the migrant in the city. The household in the village acted as a safety net for the migrants as well as a place for the women and children of the male migrant to wait until the urban household was viable enough to absorb them. In keeping with the contention of what has been called the new economics of migration, the decision to migrate was not made by individuals acting on their own, but as a part of the family (Massey *et al.* 1993). While the worker as an individual was central to this process, the migration itself tended to be focused around the family. The collective family was a discernable asset in the process of migration.

In a sense this asset is another example of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of social capital. Bourdieu defined social capital as 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition' (1986: 248). The network that exists between a family that has branches in both the village and the city would meet the condition of being durable just as the family itself is an institutionalised relationship. Social networks that aid migration, both domestic and international, have in fact been the basis of considerable research. Studies have shown that social capital distributed among community and household members strongly influences the likelihood of out-migration (Palloni *et al.* 2001). The family networks that aid migration can then be seen as a part of its larger social capital.

But there is an important difference between the social capital of a family in this sense and in the sense that is useful to our understanding of migration in Bengaluru. In the Bourdieu sense, the social capital typically refers to the connections *of* the family with others outside it. This form of social capital would go a long way towards explaining the place provided for friends in the households of families in the city. Social capital, however, can be used not just in terms of the connections of a family with those outside it, but also in terms of connections *within* a family. In our data, the bulk of the connections that a family provided for migration were to its own members. While there were connections to those outside the family, it was a far more common practice to share a household with a member of the family, even if that member was only a distant relative.

This distinction between the two uses of the concept of social capital can influence the role that social capital plays. In the Bourdieu sense, the social capital of a family could b e seen as a means of perpetuating inequality from one generation to the next. Bourdieu himself had cited the nobility as the example of social connections being institutionalised. In the other se nse of the term, in which connections are within the family, social capital need not always perpetuate inequality and could even have the opposite effect. Once the migrant is provided access to the opportunities in the city, she need not necessarily have to always remain at her earlier position in the hierarchy. In our survey, women workers at the lowest end of the social and economic ladder, such as landless Scheduled Caste labour, typically found themselves better off once they had access to jobs in the garment export industry. In the workplace they were treated by the powers that be on par with other castes, something that they could not always claim in their villages.

The assets a family provides to its migrant members need not also be confined to the connections inherent in social capital. It often includes elements of cultural capital. The term 'migration capital' has also been used to refer to an empirical finding that past family migration experience increases a person's current and future propensity to migrate (Ivlevs and King 2008). In our study too, a significant percentage of Telugu women workers cited their 'native place' to be outside both Bengaluru and Andhra Pradesh. In such cases, it is quite possible that the family had first migrated from Andhra Pradesh to some other place and then to Bengaluru. The knowledge about the challenges of migration of such families would be a part of their cultural capital.

The garment export industry in Bengaluru provides other evidence of 'migration capital' including elements of cultural capital. The cultural gap that a migrant had to bridge was often quite considerable involving as it did a transition from a village culture to that of the city. The cultural capital of the family the migrants stayed with also helped the migrants learn the ways of the city. This could involve knowledge about what was safe to do in the city and what was not. It could also introduce the migrants to the tastes of the city. There was typically a change in the dress sense of women who had migrated into the city. There was a preference for the nightgown as a regular dress, whereas they would not be seen in anything other than a sari in the village.

The cultural dimension of migration gets additional significance when the migration is from one state to another. It requires coming to terms with a different language and the social practices and politics associated with it. Dealing with this challenge requires cultural capital in all the three states that Bourdieu had identified, that is, the *embodied* state, 'in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.) ... and in the *institutionalized* state' (Bourdieu 1986: 247). In its embodied state, the family provides the individuals the disposition that is required to deal with the challenges of migration. This disposition would need, among other things, the resilience required to meet the pressures of being an outsider. In its objectified state, the cultural capital of a family includes the tools to help the migrant find a niche for her in the new social milieu. In the Indian context, these tools could be no more than the picture of a superstar that is symbolic of a language identity. This capital could also be institutionalised in the form of membership of a fan club of that superstar.

To see migration capital as a subset of Bourdieu's social capital would then be limiting. It undoubtedly has dimensions of social capital, but it also has a material as well as a cultural dimension. We may then be

better off treating a family's migration capital as a separate concept. We could define it as the entire set of benefits that a family provides to its members in the process of migration. This would include social connections, cultural elements, and material facilities. The extent of this capital would depend on the nature of relationships that qualify for this support in migration. When the support for migration is extended only to members of the nuclear family, the migration capital of that family would be low. On the other hand, in cases where the facilities are extended not only to distant relatives but also to persons from the same village, the family has a high migration capital. The extent of migration capital would also be affected by other factors such as the duration of the stay of the migrants and the cost-sharing arrangements. A family in which the support for the migrants involves only a short introductory period into the city, and that on a cost-sharing basis, would have less migration capital than one that allows migrants a longer stay with more informal sharing of costs. The volume of migration capital would also be influenced by the networks that the family in the city can offer their migrant members.

The volume of migration capital could itself be culturally determined. If we take the willingness of households of married workers to have persons staying with them who are outside the nuclear family as a broad indicator of migration capital, there was some variation across different language groups in our survey (see Table 8). The Tamils appeared to have the greatest migration capital. Nearly half the households of Tamil married-women workers had members who were not a part of their nuclear family and 17 per cent had members who were not a part of the immediate family either. In the case of the largest group among these workers – the Kannadigas – too, 40 per cent of the households had members who were not a part of the nuclear family and 12 per cent were not a part of the immediate family either. In contrast, the small group of workers from other Indian language groups in Bengaluru's garment export industry had little migration capital, with all their households consisting entirely of nuclear families.

The unevenness extends to the role played by members of a family in generating migration capital. The burden of generating migration capital was not shared equally within the family. It was the woman, as the home-maker, who had to take the responsibility of being hospitable to the migrants. The fact that the woman could also be a worker did not alter her responsibilities at home. On the contrary, she often had to choose her job in a way that did not hurt her responsibilities at home. The woman some-times opted for shifts that gave her time to finish her household chores before the men returned in the evening. She could also prefer factories

Table 8: Distribution of married women worker households by language group and type of household

Language group	Type of household			
	Nuclear family	Nuclear plus immediate family	Nuclear plus 'others'	Nuclear plus immediate family plus 'others'
Kannada	59.8	28.7	5.3	6.2
Telugu	60.0	33.3	4.4	2.2
Tamil	53.7	29.6	5.6	11.1
Others	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
All languages	61.0	28.2	4.8	6.0

Note: Figures in percentages. Rows need not add up to 100 due to rounding off.

that were closer home and hence took less time to walk to them. This gender-based burden of being the homemaker would be shared by women migrants. Much would then depend on the gender of the migrant who was provided a household in the city.

Migration capital is thus the peg on which much of the immigration of labour into the city hangs. The magnitude of this capital is dependent on cultural factors reflected in, among other things, the willingness of the woman homemaker to take on the additional burden within the household.

Conclusion

The picture that emerges from the households of women workers in Bengaluru's garment export industry is one of a migration that depends a great deal on the institution of the family. Collective family households, collective family-cum-non-family households, and collective families are well entrenched practices. The evidence also suggests that such households are not new; a similar overall pattern is visible in the older households of the unmarried women workers as well. The preference for a collective household is, however, not unchanging. It may even explain some variation across religious groups. The household of the young-married-Muslim-woman worker in particular seems more likely to consist of a nuclear family alone than that of the older Muslim household of the unmarried woman worker. But such changes are not enough to affect the overall pattern where the proportion of nuclear households does not differ very much between those of married woman workers and those of the unmarried ones.

It must be reiterated that the role of the migration capital of a family is not confined to the urban household. This capital could also take the form of support from the village for a struggling household in the city.

The wife was sometimes taken care of by the family in the village for several years while the husband found his feet in the city. Later, the child could be left with its grandparents in the village. The family in the village could also act as a safety net for the migrants in case things did not work out in the city. Even when this net was not used, the fact that it existed helped deal with the uncertainties of the city. The migrants would talk of returning to their village even when they had been in Bengaluru for a long period.

The collective families and their collective households provide a substantial amount of migration capital to the worker seeking to move from her village to the expensive city. The migration capital of a collective family eases not just the economic pressures of migration. It has a social impact on gender relations as well. The addition of women outside the nuclear family into the household helps share the burden of housework that would otherwise have to be borne entirely by the women of the nuclear family. And there is also a cultural element to the migration capital as the collective family provides the migrant woman the insights into urban practices that she needs to survive, often transforming her from a sari-clad rural woman into an urban woman who wears a night-gown to public places.

Notes

1. For a brief but elegant summary of M.N. Srinivas's 'field view', see Béteille (2009).

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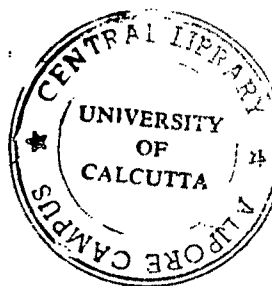
Gellnerian Theory of Nation and Nationalism: A Critical Appraisal

D.V. Kumar

Nationalism continues to have enormous power. The formulation that it has weakened or would weaken in a modern and globalised context needs to be viewed in a problematical manner. There are instances of nationalist resurgence not only in the so-called 'underdeveloped' countries but also in highly developed and 'modern' countries. The power that nationalism demonstrates now and then continues to demand our attention in terms of analysing and explaining it. This article, while broadly subscribing to Ernest Gellner's account of nation and nationalism, finds certain serious problems with it and suggests a possible way in which it can be reformulated to make it a more meaningful, satisfactory, and relevant theoretical paradigm.

[Keywords: culture; Ernest Gellner; ethnicity; modernism; nationalism]

Nationalism continues to evoke a great passion. The enormous power it wields even in the context of globalisation and 'high modernity' would necessitate a critical re-look at the formulation, which has found wide acceptability both among scholars and laymen alike, that nationalist consciousness would gradually weaken as changes of profound nature occur. The confident assertion made by M. Horsman and A. Marshall that 'the advanced industrial societies only hold up a mirror to the future of the planet, when nations and nationalism will be revealed as transient forces which are fast becoming obsolete in a world of vast transnational markets, power blocks, global consumerism and mass communications' (1994: 102) needs to be taken with a pinch of salt. The power that nationalism demonstrates now and then continues to demand our continual engagement with it in terms of understanding why and how it

remains a dominant narrative. In this paper I would pursue such an engagement by making a critical appreciation of Ernest Gellner's account of the growth of nations and nationalism. I would place the Gellnerian account within the broad theoretical paradigm of modernism which has immense explanatory power. I would briefly look at different variants of modernism that deal with the question of birth and growth of nation and nationalism, and then revisit Gellnerian arguments about nationalism, examining some of serious problems these arguments suffer from. Finally, I would suggest certain reformulations to his theory which, I think, would make his theory of nationalism more meaningful and satisfactory in terms of making sense of nationalism. Though Gellner (1925-96) was one of those scholars who took the position that nations would dissolve, I am not particularly interested in looking at this aspect of his theory. I am rather interested in looking at his account of the birth and growth of nations and nationalism and how it could be reformulated, given certain weaknesses in his theory, to make it more relevant and meaningful.

Nationalism has a dialectical quality about it: it is both inclusionary and exclusionary at the same time. The very process of including people who share the same objective and subjective characteristics in the political community of nation inevitably excludes those who do not share these. There could also be an endless argument as to who should be included and who should be excluded. It is also dialectical in another sense: it can be constructive as well as destructive. Nationalism can have an enormous emancipatory potential in terms of mobilising oppressed, disadvantaged and deprived groups under the rubric of nationalism and motivating them to struggle for their own social, economic, and political betterment. It can also have destructive potential in the sense that nationalism as a sentiment could be used by powerful groups to marginalise and subjugate the weaker ones. Some, however, focus more on the destructive aspects of nationalism. S. Kedourie (1998), for instance, would regard nationalism as destructive of all political order, though he himself spent a lot of time trying to understand the birth and growth of nationalism. Whichever way one looks at it, the dialectical nature of nationalism needs to be recognised.

We need to be familiar with the concepts that we use, namely, nation and nationalism, before we try and understand the growth and dynamics of the phenomena they denote. A.D. Smith offers us a good starting point in this connection: he defines nationalism as; 'an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of self-government and independence on behalf of a group, some of whose members conceive it to constitute an actual or potential "nation"' (1983: 171). It would also be useful to

look at the definition of nation offered by him: 'a group of human beings, possessing common and distinctive elements of culture, a unified economic system, citizenship rights for all members, a sentiment of solidarity arising out of common experiences, and occupying a common territory' (1973: 18).

Apart from the modernist interpretation of nation and nationalism, which we will be looking at shortly, there are other paradigms which, at different points of time, have proved influential ways of looking at nations and nationalism. Though they too make a serious attempt to understand the growth and the trajectory of nations, they suffer, in my view, from very serious limitations. *Perennialism,* for example, would like to maintain that nations existed for a long period of time. It is not hard to sustain such a formulation. By producing 'hard data' and some tangible remains of distant material culture, it should be possible to refer to nation as being a historical reality (Kohl and Fawcett 1995; Dia-Andreu and Smith 2001). The problem with this kind of understanding nation is that it lacks explanatory power: it does not explain why and how nations always existed. Similarly, *primordialism* looks at nations as having ineffable and affective significance for the members (Shils 1957; Geertz 1973; Van den Berghe 1978, 1979, 1995). The serious limitation with this formulation is that it does not explain the fluctuation in the intensity of expression of ethnic and nationalist aspirations (Kumar 2006: 67).

Modernism as a theoretical paradigm, on the other hand, has immense explanatory power in terms of analysing the growth of nations and nationalism. Modernism in the nationalist literature looks at nations and nationalism as essentially modern in nature; they are a product of modernity. I have elsewhere (Kumar 2008) attempted to make sense of what modernity is and elaborate and interrogate different forms of engaging with it. As far as the modernist way of looking at nations and nationalism is concerned, there are two distinct connotations, namely, chronological and sociological (Smith 2001: 46). In the chronological sense, it would mean that nation has emerged in the recent past, not earlier than a century or so. Sociologically, it indicates that the nature of nationalism is qualitatively novel; it is a product of conditions which are completely new. Nationalism as an ideology or a movement is not an updated version of seeking something which existed before. Its nature and character are completely novel, because the conditions which have given rise to it are new and novel.

This paradigm has different variants (*ibid.*: 47). The *socio-economic* variety of modernism looks at nations as products of economic forces such as industrial capitalism and their consequences for the society.

Because of uneven development of capitalism, certain regions and places continue to remain in a backward state. As a result, groups living in these regions suffer from a sense of relative deprivation, which gets ethnicised. Ethnic sentiments get aroused and mobilisation of people takes place along ethnic (nationalist) lines (Hechter 1975; Nairn 1977). Fundamentally, therefore, the economic forces led to the emergence of ethnic/nationalist movements. But this approach would leave open the question as to *why* mobilisation of people should not take place along different lines, say on class lines. Simply stating that sentiments get ethnicised and mobilisation of people would take place along ethnic lines would hardly suffice. The *socio-cultural* variety of modernism sees nationalism as a necessary cultural accompaniment to the process of modernisation (of which industrialisation is the main expression). The process of industrialisation demands free communication among people and breakdown of linguistic barriers. In this context, it is stated that schools play a crucial role in producing individuals who have the necessary skills and are able to engage in communication with each other. Sharing of the same language is a crucial attribute of nationalism. Nationalism plays a functional role for the modern and industrial society (Gellner 1964, 1983, 1987, 1994, 1996). However, the socio-cultural variety of modernism, to which I broadly subscribe, suffers from serious problems which need to be examined critically and subjected to certain reformulations so that it becomes a more relevant and satisfactory theoretical paradigm.

The *political* variety of modernism argues that nations and nationalism emerge out of the changing dynamics of the relations between the state and society. Groups and communities which do not wish to be part of any particular state try to secede from that. In this process, new nations and nationalism emerge emphasising the principle of autonomy and sovereignty (Mann 1984; Giddens 1985; Breuilly 1993). Though this approach takes into account the changing dynamics of relations between the state and society, it does not deal adequately with the dynamics of ethnicity/nationality formation. What would be the basis of group formation and why one basis and not the other are some of the issues which are not taken up for a serious interrogation?

According to the *constructionist* paradigm, the fourth variety of modernism, nations are looked at in terms of their socially constructed nature. Among the theorists who take this position are Benedict Anderson (1991) and Eric Hobsbawm (1990). For Benedict Anderson, nations are imagined political communities; they are imagined because it is impossible for members of a nation to know each other directly. Still they have a strong sense of belonging to a common nation. This sense

emerged out of the materials they use to construct nation. Nationalism, according to Hobsbawm, owes much to 'invented traditions', which are products of social engineering and are created to serve the interests of ruling elites by channelling the energies of the newly enfranchised masses. However, his use of term 'invented' (in the sense of being fabricated) is susceptible to a sustained critique because it negates the attempts to reconstruct and re-appropriate some of the already existing customs, traditions, myths, memories, and symbols which are in consonance with the sentiments and feelings of people for the purpose of mobilising them. Any project to mobilise people needs to take into account the fact that anything completely 'new' would not strike chord with them, and it necessarily has to depend on the already existing cultural resources.

Gellnerian Understanding of Nationalism

Gellner's understanding of nation and nationalism, their birth and growth, has become so dominant and powerful that one cannot remain indifferent to it (O' Leary 1998). His ideas on nationalism compel the engagement of all those who are interested in the study of nationalism. His way of looking at nationalism posed a serious challenge to the intellectual hegemony of conservatives who dominated before the Enlightenment, and rationalists, who began to dominate the intellectual space after the Enlightenment. He rejected religion as a legitimate principle of political order, an idea which was a direct challenge to the conservatives, for whom religion constituted the core principle. Against secular rationalists he was arguing that material prosperity, utility, law, etc. were of secondary importance in establishing a stable and legitimate political order.

Gellner argues, it is nationalism which leads to nations rather than the other way around. Nations emerge out of the ideology of nationalism; nationalism invents nations where they do not already exist. The question is, how does nationalism emerge? But, before that, what according to Gellner is nationalism? In his own words,

> nationalism is the general imposition of a high culture on society, where previously low had taken up the lives of the majority and in some cases the totality of the population. It means the general diffusion of a school-mediated, academy -supervised idiom, codified for the requirements of a reasonably precise bureaucratic and technological communication. It is the establishment of an anonymous impersonal society, with mutually substitutable atomised individuals, held together above all by a shared culture of this kind, in place of the previous complex structure local groups, sustained

by folk cultures reproduced locally and idiosyncratically by the micro-groups themselves (1983: 57).

Gellner looks at the birth of nationalism in terms of both positive social foundations and, for want of a better term, what can be called negative social foundations. Positively, nationalism is a product of the process of industrialisation. This process requires the development of highly advanced forms of communication, as the work to be done is mostly semantic which in turn requires development of standardised means of communication, that is, development of a uniform language. A uniform language generates greater cultural identification. In his own words, 'modern people do not in general become nationalists from sentiments or sentimentality atavistic or not, well-based or myth-founded: they become nationalists, through genuine, objective, practical necessity, however obscurely recognized' (1964: 160). This could be represented as follows:

industrialisation → nationalism → nation

This way of looking at the emergence of nationalism is explicitly functionalist in nature. Gellner's theory of nationalism is credited with having almost reified functionalism. In fact, Perry Anderson argues that the 'most arresting feature of Gellnerian theory of nationalism is its single-minded economic functionalism' (1992: 207). One can find the functionalist cast of Gellner's argument in his own words:

> So the economy needs both the new type of central culture and the central State; the culture needs the State and the State probably needs the homogenous cultural branding of its flock... In brief, the mutual relationship of a modern culture and State is something quite new and springs, inevitably, from the requirement of a modern economy (1983: 48).

If one takes this proposition to its logical conclusion, one would arrive at the following formulations (see Elster 1983):

1. Nationalism is an effect of modernisation.
2. Nationalism is beneficial for modernising states, because a highly specialised division of labour requires a unified high culture, which is underpinned by a highly developed and specialised educational system.
3. Nationalism (in Gellnerian sense) is unintended by the actors producing modernisation.

4. The causal relationship between nationalism and modernisation is not recognised by the agents operating in modernising societies.
5. Nationalism functionally maintains modernisation by a feedback loop operating through the action of modernising states.

Negatively, the uneven spread of modernisation has a huge potential in generating nationalist aspirations. Uneven modernisation aggravates the existing inequalities among differently placed groups, and the intelligentsia from the deprived groups harp on their separate distinctive identity as a means, a weapon in their hands for overcoming the structures of inequality. The result is the birth of nationalist movements. In Gellner's words, 'nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist but it does need some pre-existing differentiating marks to work on, even if ... these are purely negative' (1964: 168).

Gellner's philosophy of history looks at three important phases in human societies: pre-agrarian, agrarian, and industrial. In the pre-agrarian societies, it would be senseless to talk of nationalism, as these were essentially stateless societies and speaking in terms of nation-state about them would be meaningless. In the agrarian societies, the elites did not share a common culture with the masses and, in the absence of a common culture, nationalist ideology would have had no basis. The industrial society, on the other hand, needs to have a proper communication among its people which would mean that there has to be a common language to facilitate such a communication.

Gellner's theory of nationalism, if not properly reformulated, is vulnerable to some serious problems. One ground on which his theory could be taken to task is that it is explicitly instrumentalist and functionalist in orientation, that is, Gellner looks at nationalism as being functional for modernisation (Benedict Anderson 1991: 207). Nationalism strengthens the process of modernisation and industrialisation by harping on high culture. Without a shared high culture (nationalism), modernisation would not be successful. Thus, it becomes clear that his explanation is teleological in nature, that is, it explains the causes of a phenomenon in terms of the needs it serves. His idea that the industrial society characterised as it is by social mobility, relative egalitarianism, anonymity, semantic/communicative rather than physical work requires a context-free medium of communication, that is, a nationalist ideology based on mass literacy/education, has a functional and teleological slant to it. This understanding leads to the impression that the needs of an industrial society are illegitimately transformed into causes which more or less automatically create nationalism. Such a position would neglect

the active involvement of people in the construction of nationalism. One need not be a hardcore phenomenologist to appreciate the active involvement of people in producing nationalism. Apart from being teleological, its neglect of actors' perspective needs to be seriously questioned.

The second problem with Gellner's theory is that it ignores the passions and emotions that are deeply implicated in the birth of nationalism. Gellner only looks at nationalism as a product of modernisation, thus underpinning its instrumentalist dimension. It must, however, be recognised that nationalism is not something that simply emerges as a matter of natural course from the process of modernisation. Rather it is something that requires the investment of considerable time and energy on the part of those who are involved in bringing it about, a point which has not been given sufficient importance by Gellner.

Thirdly, as some would argue, Gellner is wrong on his thesis that nationalism is a product of industrialisation; contrarily, nationalism existed before industrialisation (see Armstrong 1982; Smith 1986). It has also been argued that establishing a kind of causality between the two – industrialism and nationalism – would be problematical in the absence of conclusive proof. In fact, it is possible to think of societies where industrialisation has occurred without being accompanied by nationalism, or of societies where nationalism happened without industrialisation. For example, Nicos Mouzelis (1998: 158), giving such examples, refers to proto-industrialisation of several regions in Western Europe where the former has occurred and the Balkans and Latin America in the 19th century where the latter has taken place. He would go further and argue, citing scholars such as M. Mann, Anthony Giddens, and others, that nationalism has not happened because of the development of markets and industry; rather it was because of the development of the state and its institutions such as military, bureaucracy, and advanced forms of tax structure which resulted in the destruction of political, economic, and cultural localism. The 'infrastructural development of the state', to use Mann's terminology, eventually led to the transformation of absolutist states into nation-states, and of 'subjects' into 'citizens' (Mann 1984: 72).

Fourthly, Gellner's theory of the birth of nationalism is not sufficiently political in nature; it does not take sufficient note of the political dynamics that underlies the nationalist movements. It is too immersed in the materialist foundations of nationalism that it does not have any space for the political nature of nationalism. Arguing along these lines, Brendan O' Leary (1998: 63) makes an important point that Gellnerian theory appears to rely on materially reductionist accounts of nationalism.

The kind of role that power-politics plays in determining which cultures become nations has not been dealt with in this theorisation.

To be fair to Gellner, he did try and give elaborate answers to his critics (see Gellner 1996). Against the first criticism, for example, he argues that his theory is *not* teleological and that he has attempted to provide a deeply causal account of the growth of nationalism. He has avoided the illegitimate transformation of needs into causes by spelling out the *mechanisms* that link industrial functional requirements with the emergence and consolidation of a literacy-linked, context-free nationalist idiom. These mechanisms are related to the fact that the people who are unable to acquire such a nationalist idiom feel enormously disadvantaged and discriminated against.

Similarly, reacting to the criticism that he is indifferent to emotions entertained by the people, he argues that he understands the power of nationalism for the people and communities. More precisely,

> nationalism is not explained by the use it has in legitimising modernisation – a view with which I am quite mistakenly credited – but by the fact that individuals find themselves in very stressful situations, unless the nationalist requirement of congruence between a man's culture and that of his environment is satisfied. Hence that deep passion which, according to Perry Anderson, is absent both from my theory and my bosom. As it happens, it is very much present in both of them. The passion is not a means to some end. It is a reaction to an intolerable situation, to a constant jarring in the activity which is by far the most important thing in life – contact and communication with fellow human beings (1996: 627-28).

Despite his attempt to give elaborate answers to his critics, there is one missing link in his theory which needs to be taken note of. I am broadly in agreement with the formulation that nationalism (understood as an ideology, movement, sentiment) and nations (defined in terms of common memory, language, claim over a 'homeland', public culture, equal citizenship rights and duties, language, striving for political sovereignty with their own states, etc.) are a modern phenomenon and their rise needs to be explained in terms of political and economic conditions which obtain in the modern world, as Gellner sought to do. However, I would like to argue that their links with ethnies (the French term for ethnic communities), with their collective identity, memory, myth, and sentiments need to be recognised. In other words, I would like to view nations as having been constructed out of ethnic materials. The essential problem that I find with his theory of nationalism is that except for saying that nations need to work on some pre-existing differentiating marks, it does not really elaborate much on this very crucial point.

At this juncture, a little clarification is required. It should be clear that the formulation that nations have been constructed out of ethnic materials is quite different from the assertion that nations have always existed. In my view, while the inalienable links between ethnies and nations need to be recognised, the assertion that nations have always existed is deeply problematical. There are some scholars who have taken this position. For example, L. Greenfield's work on the first expression of national sentiment in England in the early 16th century (Greenfield 1992), in which she presents a wealth of literary evidence to support her argument. Others who have taken this position, that is, nations are much older than Gellner would like to believe, include Adrian Hastings (1997), who argues that one can find features of nation and national sentiment at least from the later medieval period. I would like to state that one problem with these formulations is that there is a kind of reading back into the formation of the 'old' nations the assumptions of modern nationalism. One finds operation of 'retrospective nationalism' in these formulations. As S. Reynolds would argue,

> this perspective on nations prevents us from appreciating the ideas and sentiments of the early (or later) Middle Ages for what they were in themselves, without imposing a retrospective relationship between the medieval 'people' and their kingdom on the one hand and the modern 'nation' and its state on the other (1984: 253).

Reynolds also finds the idea that nations are objective realities existing through history highly problematical: 'a more fundamental distortion arises from the fact that belief in the objective reality of nations inevitably diverts attention from itself: since the belief that nation exists is seen not as a political theory but as a mere recognition of fact' (*ibid.*: 251).

Furthermore, such a formulation makes an assertion which has not been conclusively established. When one argues that nations have been present for long, one needs to substantiate it. As L. Johnson (1955) would argue, the formulation tends to *assume what has to be proved*, and its tendency to posit a historical continuity, given the silences and complexities of the historical evidence, is at best problematic. Besides agreeing with this, I would also like to argue that conflating nations with ethnies as they existed before would do serious conceptual violence, though the nation, as stated earlier, needs to be built on certain existing cultural resources (such as traditions, myths, symbols, etc.). There is a need to make a clear conceptual distinction between the two. Though certain things are common between them such as sense of shared history, identifying name, myths of common origin, traditions, customs, beliefs,

etc., there are clear distinguishing marks, too. For example, nation is characterised by certain features which an ethnie lacks -- a clearly delimited territory or 'homeland', a public culture, economic unity, and legal rights and duties for everyone (Smith 1998: 196).

The issue of ethnic roots of nation needs to be dealt with the seriousness it deserves. Any modernist account of nations and nationalism would be poorer if it does not properly account for the durability and widespread appeal of nation. This could be done, in my view, if it takes into consideration the importance of unifying memories and myths, symbols and values, and traditions – the stuff that an ethnie is made of. A modern nation needs not only a territory, economy, legal code, and so on, but also an ethnic foundation to be able to mobilise and integrate diverse social and cultural elements. One could, for example, speak with some authority of a French or English ethnie that formed the core of French and English Kingdom by the 15th century. As Smith (1998: 13) would argue, national intellectuals play an important role in selecting and elaborating appropriate folk tales, ballads, epics, customs, and rituals, which are weaved into a continuous dramatic narrative of the 'rediscovered' nation. This would mean making a selection between alternative traditions, and events and ironing out inconsistencies and contradictions. The aim is to put together the different cultural elements in a dramatic narrative form which would inspire the members of the ethnic to return to ancestral ways and ideas for the purpose of mobilising them to create, on its basis, a modern nation. This is what many painters and poets, musicians and novelists in late 18th, 19th, and early 20th century Europe and America laboured to represent in their tableaux of an imagined national past, on the basis of the historians' and philologists' researches (Einstein 1947; Rosenblum 1967).

The essential point that needs to be underscored is that the significance of the past (recognising the ethnic roots of modern nation) which embodies collective memories and a communal standard for inspiring and motivating the collectivity to aspire for a modern nation must be appreciated. Visions of a heroic past are constantly invoked to provide a solid and secure base for a modern nation. For example, the Davidic kingdom in ancient Israel became a source of inspiration in the early Haskalah (Enlightenment) movement in early 19th century German and Polish Jewry (Eisenstein-Barzilay 1959; Meyer 1967). States on the banks of river Ganga similarly served to inspire a Hindu Indian national revival in the late 19th century (Sakai 1961). These visions of a past are placed in the context of a wider myth of origin and descent, which become nationalist charter myth of the nation, instead of being isolated traditions or variants thereof, recorded in ancient epics, sagas, and folk-

tales (Smith 1988: 12). One has only to consider the strong attachment communities like the Afrikaners, Basques, Tamils, or Sikhs have to their ethnic histories and cultures to realise that over and above the other goals they may serve (nationalist regeneration, for example) they are end-values in themselves.

As groups and groups of people define themselves in ethnic terms, the ethnic roots of the nation become increasingly visible, forcing even those groups which defined themselves in civic terms to regard them-selves increasingly as ethnic nations, as happened in late 19th century France (Smith 1986). One point that needs to be taken note of at this juncture is that, more often than not, there would be disagreement among different classes and groups within an ethnic about the selection of cultural elements for nationalist regeneration. There would be frequent contestations about which elements need to be taken as the most authentic expression of their ethnic status. This does not, however, detract from that fact that the ethnic past serves as a model for inspiring a nationalist regeneration. As Smith (2001: 101) would remind us, western societies were historically formed around 'ethnic cores': dominant ethnies which originated or founded the community and supplied most of the elite personnel of the state, as was the case in the first nation-states -- England, France, Holland, Spain, and Sweden – as well as in Hungary and Poland. Furthermore, he would argue that even an immigrant nation like the United States was created by the elites of a dominant Protestant British ethnie, though its ethnic character was subsequently transformed by waves of large-scale immigration (*ibid.*). For Smith, all nations and nationalism are, at root, 'ethnic', and any distinction between 'ethnic' and 'civil' nationalism is sociologically misleading.

Therefore, for Smith, the study of ethnies becomes central to the understanding of why and how particular nations have emerged. He sees clusters of myths, symbols, memories, values, and traditions emerging from the shared experiences of several generations of cohabiting populations, as the defining cultural elements from which ethnic groups emerged. It was the revolutionary nature of the economic, administrative, and cultural transformations that took place in 17th and 18th century Europe that brought culture and ethnic identity to the fore as a basis for polity formation. This provided the context in which nations emerged drawing heavily on the cultural resources of ethnic communities. The sharing of traditions, myths, symbols, common sense of ancestry etc. became a central cultural resource to be made effective use of by nationalists in the formation of nations,

In this connection, the important point that Smith raises is that the elements that are sought to be re-appropriated and reconstructed from the

ethnic past to bolster nationalist strivings must resonate with large numbers of the designated 'co-nationals', failing which any nationalist project is bound to fail. As he would argue, 'if they are not perceived as authentic in the sense of having meaning and resonance with the "people" to whom they are addressed, they will fail to mobilise them for political action' (1998: 198).

This is where the similar arguments advanced by some scholars on nationalism and nation also become quite significant. For example, J. Armstrong (1982), who broadly subscribes to the ethno-symbolic approach, argues that the symbols, myths, and communication which defined an ethnic identity in the pre-modern times are also the defining characteristics of the political community of nation. For Armstrong, symbols are quite significant in the sense that they act as 'borders' distinguishing the self from the others. Equally important are the legitimating myths: 'the legitimating power of individual mythic structures tends to be enhanced by fusion with other myths in a *mythomoteur* defining identity in relation to a specific polity' (*ibid.*: 8). Myths have an immense power in the sense that they generate great passion among the members. As he argues, the recital of myths can engender an intense awareness among group members of their 'common fate', by which is meant the extent to which an episode 'arouses intense affect by stressing individuals' solidarity against an alien force, that is, by enhancing the salience of boundary perceptions' (*ibid.*: 9). What is important to recognise in this formulation is that the elements of collective passion and attachment which are ignored in the Gellnerian account of the growth of nation (despite his laboured defence) are given adequate treatment. These elements play a crucial role in the growth of nationalist consciousness. This formulation seeks to explore the reasons for 'continued emotional attachment of the people to their ethnic communities and nations and for their capacity for fanatical terrorism and self-sacrifice' (Smith 2001: 59). This, however, does not mean that 'objective' factors (political and economic factors) are ignored. An understanding of the working of subjective factors would help us enter the 'inner worlds' of ethnicity and nationalism (*ibid.*: 57). Nationalist efforts are directed at making an effective use of these aspects of social and cultural existence. This provides an important corrective to the Gellnerian account of nationalism which primarily looks at nations in a deeply functionalist and instrumentalist posture underplaying the relevance of symbols, myths, and communication which formed the core of an ethnic identity and from which nations began to take shape in the context of industrialisation and modern world.

More evidence, no doubt, needs to be gathered to identify the channels through which ethnies are transmitted and transformed into modern nations. However, ignoring the ethnic links of the modern nation precludes us from appreciating the passions which nationalist efforts arouse. Gellnerian account of nationalism could be made more meaningful if this glaring anomaly, that is, neglect of ethnic roots of nations is rectified.

Acknowledgements

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Is Person/al the Terrorised Unity of Private and Public? Rethinking Gandhi, Integrationism, and the Politics of Pure Means

Arnab Chatterjee

It is common place now, in an age of divisions and deception, falling standards, and fallible politicians, to recall how Mahatma Gandhi wanted the public life to be an echo of the private life. The public preacher and the private practitioner have to be reconciled in the same person and at some level of virtue! But how is it possible to integrate the private and the public at the site of the 'echo' without dissolving the differences on which they are found? Taking cue from a neglected exchange between Mahatma Gandhi and Motilal Nehru, this article brings out the dilemmas inherent in such an experiment and engages in an against-the-grain reading of this moment to address the larger social-political questions of democratic or dictatorial senti-ments and structures.

[Key words: Gandhi; integrity; person(al); private; public]

> *I think the political life must be an echo of private life and that there cannot be any divorce between the two.*
>
> – Mahatma Gandhi (1996: 109).

Today, when we confront a man who is a feminist in the public sphere but batters his wife at home, or a public egalitarian who discriminates woefully in private, we are reminded of these words of Gandhi – a desperate strategy by which transparency could be sought. Even the recent surge of sting investigations in India and elsewhere have often

been justified based on this premise. But this is also the statement that
has led hordes of critics astray (from the traditional Gandhi admirers to
the critical neo-Gandhians), since it has been assumed, through this, that
integrating the private and the public is the secret of not only the
Gandhian ethic, but rehearses in its womb a thousand years of ethico-
theological (in Gandhi's case 'spiritual') desire as a counterpoint to liberal
modernity – the latter being strictly founded on a distinction between the
private and the public. A philosophical century ago it was the question of
integrating the outside and the inside,[1] or the mind and the body;[2] in
Gandhi's schema of an alternative modernity this assumed the form of
integrating the private and the public.[3] And, now, in an age of heightened
hypocrisy and terrible double standards, his words carry a strong, vigorous
and relevant ring. In this article, I shall argue, against this established
array of arguments, why such integration is not possible and if it were
possible, then at what cost. How did Gandhi want to pay for such a will –
if there was one? But first, a story to begin at the beginning.

Integrating Wine and Bifurcation of the Simple

In 1920-21, Motilal Nehru is reported to have played a leading role in the
anti-liquor picketing.[4] Three years after this, it was 1924. Read the tract
of a dilemma via the voice of Gandhi – who, having received a dubious
paper cutting from a journalist, writes to Motilal Nehru:

> The writer has sent me the enclosed cutting (from *The Leader*). I had not
> read it before. He says that at another dinner you are reported to have said:
> 'Water has been called pure. But wine is made after being thrice distilled.
> It is, therefore, purer than water.'... if the report is to be relied upon, *I*
> *cannot but be grieved that you, who lead the anti-liquor campaign, should*
> *publicly drink it and, what is worse, chaff at teetotalism.... I know that if a*
> *man drinks privately, he may drink publicly too. A public man,[5] however,*
> *may not drink publicly, if he is likely to offend. I distinguish between*
> *private drinking and secret drinking* (Gandhi 1967: 350-51; italics mine).[6]

In his lengthy reply, Motilal Nehru avoided answering the main question:
whether it is apt to lead an anti-liquor campaign as well as drink at the
same time: Instead, he wrote:

> The charge divides itself into two counts: (i) that I have drunk wine
> publicly, and (ii) that I said in the course of an after dinner speech that
> 'Water has been called pure but wine is made after being thrice distilled. It
> is, therefore, purer than water.' My answer to the first count is an
> unequivocal 'yes'. As to the second, I am sure I did not institute any

comparison between the respective merits of wine and water. The statement, as reported, is too silly. [....] In fact, during the forty years preceding 1921, I had seldom missed my evening drink for 11 months in the year. I abstained for one month in every year simply to avoid getting enslaved to the habit... *I must also respectfully differ from the distinction you draw between 'Private drinking and secret drinking'.* In my humble opinion, *it is a distinction without a difference.* ... pray do not misunderstand me. I do not mean that I am going to take to regular boozing at this time of my life because of the stupid attacks made on me. I may or may not drink at all. This is my own concern. But if I do, *nothing in the world will make me seek privacy for doing so. I would have the world judge as I am and not as others would wish me to appear... The tongue of slander will not deter me from what is right and proper.* ... It is for you to judge which is the graver offence – the levity in which I indulged in the course of a private talk with a friend or the publication of the talk by that friend (Jayakar 1958: 333-35; italics mine).

Two synoptic inferences should be made here. Gandhi is proposing an integration between the public agenda that a public man puts forward and whether he believes and practises the same in his private life – as far as that is practicable – unless he is ready to take recourse to the secret. At the same time, he is also proposing a model of the 'public man': a private person may drink publicly, he does not offend any one; a public person cannot do so, he offends because he has preached to the contrary ('And let us remind ourselves here that to the picketer Motilal boozing was an evil – not a temporary one but an 'evil incarnate', evil in itself' [Nehru 1984: 45].)

This has been referred to in ethical debates as the problem of integration,[7] which, I assume, should be pegged at the level of the person-al[8] and Gandhi exactly does the same by making a distinction between persons. Since, unless there is a third, the question that shall haunt this binary while forging a unity is, which is being sacrificed to what: either the public will melt in the private or the private will loose itself in the public. Therefore, Gandhi rightly needs a third where these two could be brought together to have a dialogue: that is the person. This is, however, very different from making the private and public one as upheld in dominant Gandhian secondary discourse. The private and the public become indistinguishable only in the person in the instance of personal integrity: Gandhi's unforgettable exhortation that 'we may not return anger but gentleness even against anger' (Gandhi 1996:113) is axiomatic of such integrity. Methodologically, Gandhi has the instance of the person and his character where the impersonal private/public registers

would be united in a principled, living moment. This is what he has to say in a context which is provoking and yet pertinent:

> '*Shastra* is not anything written in a book. It should be a living thing. Hence the words of a wise man of good character whose actions are *in accord* with his speech are our *shastra* (*ibid.*: 189; italics mine).

Not only action in accord with speech, Gandhi goes so far as to bring speech in accord with thoughts: 'Let us not tell the world that there is one thing on our lips and another in our thoughts' (*ibid.*: 132). This bringing 'in accord' (using Gandhi's own words) is what we designate, borrowing the language of moral philosophy, as *integration*.

Furthermore, Gandhi is firmly and rightly of the view that the person and his phenomenology is capable of transcending the public/private divide along which the separation of sovereignty was cast. The person imbibes the living principle:

> ... if a person has violated a moral principle in any one sphere of his life, his action will certainly have an effect in other spheres. In other words the belief generally held that an immoral man may do no harm in the political sphere is quite wrong. And so is the other belief that a person who violates moral principles in his business may be moral in his private life or in his conduct in family affairs' (*ibid.*: 182).

Through the axis of the person, Gandhi overrides the private/public disjunction. Gandhi invokes the question of integrating (or, in his own words, bringing 'in accord') the public and the private at the level of the person (the person is the third here in the sense – if the public and the private form the first and the second isotopy [in the semiotic sense], then the person is the third isotopy); but there is a catch here. Quite strangely, Gandhi does not regulate the question of such integration for all persons; he makes a distinction between public persons and private persons. Gandhi ends with his will to integrate the public and the private for public persons. For private persons, he would not make this compulsory, since – it seems – they could not be held to have a message at the public level, there is no question of violating them.

Therefore, what we have here is the axiom that public/private can be brought together at the level of the person-al third (though not the third person) by this manoeuvre of Gandhi; manoeuvre because the binary is otherwise locked in its own insurmountable and instrumental opposition. And this overcoming, as it is evident, Gandhi would hold active only for public persons and not for private persons. But this will not work:

We enter into discussing this by asking a preliminary question: what kind of consequential understanding does it entail for the concepts public and private? We enter this domain (but) by acknowledging first that Gandhi – at least for this moment – is well within the liberal distinction; the only transcendence that he can achieve is when he wants to forge a unity and discover a third. Secondly, unity, allegedly or evidently, is for public persons only; but who are public persons anyway? From which inventory and by what taxonomy can they be defined? As discussed before, and which will frustrate his anti-enlightenment admirers further, there is no Indian cultural stock here to which Gandhi could refer. While this is true for the moment,[9] the fact that Gandhi had been associated with anti-western indigenous impulses and a vibrant vernacularist out-break – even in matters of taxonomy – is true for Gandhi's overall position. But, while it was otherwise and quite rarely, Gandhi intuitively knew what was at stake: 'The word 'vow' is also an unsuitable equivalent for the original *vrata*. But the best thing for me is to explain what I mean and then leave you to find the exact word if you endorse my position' *(ibid.:* 201). This hermeneutic wholeness (elsewhere: 'we mean the same thing but express it differently – you in Spanish and I in Italian' *[ibid.:* 202]) where explanation and meaning precedes iteration is a pointer to the Gandhian philosophy of language (along with the radically political conscience that the master's language can never be mastered: 'We never master the English language' *[ibid.:* 290]). Thereby, where I speak about the lack of Indian cultural stock for the moment and while 'public person' and 'private person' are immediately western taxonomic predications and we have a western jurisprudence classic to speak for that, the question of 'personal integrity' at the level of the person – as we shall discover – is also 'spiritual' in the original Gandhian sense.

If we are convinced by now of Gandhi's apparent adoption of western taxonomy and then transcendence, here is Sir Thomas Erskine Holland:

> By a 'Public person' we mean either the State, or the sovereign part of it, or a body or individual holding delegated authority under it. By a 'Private person' we mean an individual or collection of individuals however large, who, or each one of whom is of course a unit of the State, but in no sense represents it, even for a special purpose (1924: 127).

Now, having known the statist ground of a 'public person', it would be worthwhile to remember that while Gandhi calls for integration for public persons (associated with the state), the *agenda* (drinking) he chooses belongs somewhere else. Drinking, like sexuality and allied choices, is a social life practice belonging to the realm of the *society* and

not the *state*. This is the larger liberal binary within which the private and the public are subsumed: society and state.[10] Society is the realm of freedom from the interference of the state – the area of good life and irreconcilable conceptions of the good. Likewise, drinking as an entertaining social life practice is related to the ideal of a good life that I have, not to be regulated by a liberal state (unless I harm others). This puts Gandhi unto an irresolvable paradox: he has to integrate state and society before he could pose the question of public/private integration, even if it is only for a public person. If, allegedly, integration is his agenda, Gandhi has to integrate two sets of categories: society and state, and public and private. This requires a magic? We shall discover, and quite dangerously, that unless Gandhi takes recourse to an algorithm (we shall name the genre later) where society and state are undivided in one person, he cannot pose the question of such an integrity at all. This is the dilemma.

'Adult Education' for Very Unreasonable, Involuntary Incest

Let us start by asking a simple question: how is Gandhi to be situated in relation to the problem of drinking? In other words, how does he discover and translate it as a problem? It should be obvious to anybody having preliminary acquaintance with Gandhi and Gandhiana that there is always a broader narrative with him to absorb every fragment of experimentation or protest he proposes. Drinking, as 'evil', therefore, predictably is 'national evil' to Gandhi. That he would allow secret drinking for a public person, or private or public drinking for a private person, is a testimony to the fact that, as he confessed once, he did not want to make a 'fetish of consistency'. Thus, being inconsistent allowed differences and encouraged a positive, nearly unpredictable plurality. However, this difference is abolished the moment we hear his call for absolute prohibition on the sale of drinking. Why drinking after all, and why subsequently a call for prohibition?

Firstly, 'prohibition is to mean a great moral awakening in India' and the campaign for prohibition led by women would be an immense civic education of the masses (Gandhi uses a peculiar ascriptor here: 'adult education' – we will soon come to that). But this evil, as it is evident, Gandhi knows, is shared both by the ruler and the ruled, by the coloniser and the colonised, by the rich and the poor without distinction. So, here it is necessary to wrench oneself away not supposedly from an evil infused by a coloniser, but from the evil or the habit itself. But what is so evil or morally degenerative about drinking? Here we come to the most interest-

ing part and that which will anticipate more surprises when it finally takes the interpretive turn.

Gandhi clearly and repetitively dubs drinking as a 'robber of reason' (1960a: 5) so much so that he asserts that the alcoholic tends to forget 'the distinction between wife and mother, lawful and unlawful' (*ibid.*). He shivers imagining this dark night of incest and, this time, he wants to protect *reason* – eluding his anti-enlightenment admirers, but at the same time it must be acknowledged, to the latter's relief, this is *communicative* reason and not *substantive* reason of the enlightenment. When it comes to incest, he is into a more serious, severe sexual economy. 'The drunkard forgets the distinction between wife, mother and sister and indulges in crimes of which in his sober moments he will be ashamed' (*ibid.:* 3); but, this evil levels all, 'I have seen respectable Englishmen rolling in the gutter under the effect of alcohol' (*ibid.:* 6).

To invoke this moral reasoning, where sexual reasoning and prohibitions are not done away with, what needs to be done? Primarily, 'adult education':

> Women ... will visit those who are addicted to drink and try to win them from the habit. Employers of labour will be expected by law to provide cheap, healthy refreshment, reading and entertainment rooms where the working men can go and find shelter, knowledge, health giving food and drink and innocent fun (*ibid.:* 18).

Fine, but will this, in terms of effectiveness and finality, work? '... it would be a wrong thing for you to say that education has to precede legislation. Education will never be able to cope with the evil' (*ibid.:* 8).

Gandhi is aware of the obstacles in his path to eradicate the above (or any) evil of unreasonableness exemplified in involuntary incest and for which he justifiably thinks his 'adult education' insufficient. He is well aware that either private or public rights would be invoked to hurt this agenda. To Gandhi, a woman becomes a 'public woman' by selling sex, which is an intimately private 'virtue' not to be sold or sacrificed. Further, evident in the statement 'Those who speak in the name of individual freedom do not know their India' (*ibid.:* 11) is the anxiety that if the language of liberal freedom as a right is projected or allowed to interpellate, 'There is as much right of a person to demand drinking facilities from the state as there is to demand facilities for the supply of public women for the satisfaction of his animal passion' (*ibid.*). Therefore, neither would Gandhi invoke the mixing of public and private, keeping the example of 'public woman' and demand for liquor, nor would he surrender to the liberal language of rights which would act as hindrances

to the abolition of the 'evil'. Here then we have been served with certain answers to questions we have been posing throughout. However, the public/private impasse seems to be overbearing; what would Gandhi do then? Gandhi requires a transcendental magic!

To protect the prohibition on incest what does Gandhi suggest? Prohibition of liquor, of course, but an iota more than that and here is the long awaited answer:

> If I was appointed dictator for one hour for all India, the first thing I would do would be to close without compensation all the liquor shops, destroy all the toddy palms such as I know them in Gujarat, compel factory owners to produce humane conditions for their workmen and open refreshment and recreation rooms where these workmen would get innocent drinks and equally innocent amusements. I would close down the factories if the owners pleaded want of funds. Being a teetotaller I would retain my sobriety in spite of the possession of one hour's dictatorship and therefore arrange for the examination of my European friends and diseased persons who may be in medical need of brandy and the like at State expense by medical experts and where necessary, they would receive certificates which would entitle them to obtain the prescribed quantity of fiery waters from certified chemists. The rule will apply *mutates mutandis* to intoxicating drugs.
>
> For the loss of revenue from drinks, I would straightway cut down the military expenditure and expect the Commander-in-Chief to accommodate himself to the new conditions in the best way he can. The workmen left idle by the closing of factories, I would remove to model farms to be immediately opened as far as possible in the neighbourhood of the factories unless I was advised during that brief hour that the State could profitably run the factories under the required conditions and could therefore take over from the owners (*ibid.:* 9).

This is not to inscribe within the Gandhian discourse an elemental hour of contradiction and prove discursive incoherence; our engagement is not with the psycho-biography[11] or the truth of the Gandhian discourse in general so that it can be countered by a contrasting utterance made by Gandhi elsewhere. Truly, in dealing with the irreconcilable differentiation of life spheres in modernity and subsequently public and private, we have been examining the origin and future of a discourse trying (not) to make them compatible. What I shall try to argue here is that this dictatorial apparatus is not a matter of intellectual or infinite manifest desire belonging to an agency (peculiar to Gandhi) but an immanent necessity (and could be deployed by anybody) which rises in response to the need to transcend public/private and unite them in one. But this is not the original moment. It is elsewhere.

Defenceless Enclosed Arena of Tumult

The incestuous excess induced by drinking has to be countered by a power that is excessive: why? In other words, it could not be confronted by the 'politics of pure means'. Because such a practice is not only inextricably and elementally tied to non-violent peace or the discourse of pure means; it is its *habitus*. 'Unproductive expenses: luxury, mourning, ceremonies, wars, cults, the erection of splendid buildings, games, theatre, the arts, perverse sexuality (that is, detached from genitality) represent activities that at least originally have their end in themselves' (Habermas 1993: 223). Without a single strike of doubt we may incorporate drinking and relate it to the perverse sexuality of incest in the list of unproductive expenses. Thereby Gandhi's proposal to institute 'cheap, healthy refreshment, reading and entertainment rooms where the working men can go and find shelter, knowledge, health giving food and drink and innocent fun' (*ibid.*: 18), or drinking as allowed to fulfil a 'medical necessity' (all within a rubric we might name as 'productive expense and consumption') is not to be had in the temporality of pure means where activities are ends in themselves.

Elsewhere (see Arnab Chatterjee 2007), invoking such a context of 'peace', I had begun relating it to leisure by arguing that one of the primary theories of peace may be traced to Aristotle. For Aristotle (2001: 1299-1300), peace is connected to leisure since 'leisure ... comes with peace' and also peace is the end of war and leisure is the end of toil. Peace is also a kind of virtue that is derived from leisure. Here, interestingly, it finds support in Jürgen Habermas arguing this for Bataille, 'The self sufficient activity performed for its own sake (Aristotle), as displayed in the luxury of the leisure classes, still reveals something of primordial sovereignty' (1993: 223). This excess that gives content to the discourse of pure means: non-violent peace or primordial sovereignty, could not be overcome from within that discourse, but only violently from without: forcible prohibition 'without compensation'. In other words, the excess of drinking leading to a loss of reason and sexual economy could be overcome yet by another power that is excessive: the dictatorial negation. Gandhi is true to this structure, therefore, by immanent necessity; there is veritably no other alternative. (To clarify, this 'structural' inference is in a sense impersonal and not a qualitative comment on the Gandhian discourse in general.)

Let us put this schematically in the form of an elaboration. If we look at the list of unproductive expenses above, we shall find a curious heterogeneity of items: from 'war' to 'orgies' and 'perverse sexuality'. In other words, what we shall classify today under private and/or public are

rooted in a disastrous unity there. But this is not an artificial, synthe-
tically superimposed unity of differences; it instances the medieval,
monarchical sovereignty which is the origin of this unity. There is no
state/society distinction by which these objects could be allocated. The
person or the body of the monarch holds them all without distinction;
since any discrimination would divide his person/body and his powers.
Hobbes stated this classically when he said somewhere in the
monarchical context that the representer is the sovereign, not the
represented. This argument, what to say of the Middle Ages, would flow
correctly and absorb even history during the *ancien régime:*

> The society of the *ancien régime* represented its unity and its identity to
> itself as that of a body – a body which found its figuration in the body of
> the king, or rather which identified itself with the king's body, while at the
> same time it attached itself to it as its head (Lefort 1989: 303).

With the onset of the democratic revolution, this unity 'burst out when
the body of the king was destroyed, when the body politic was de-
capitated and when, at the same time, the corporeality of the social was
dissolved' *(ibid.)* The historical opposition to universal suffrage, where
the represented is the (so-called) sovereign, was thus well placed because
'Number breaks down unity, destroys identity' *(ibid.)*. With the state/
society and public/private division now inaugurated, there was no looking
back. Divisions in the 'ungraspable' society now looked clear and could
not be demythicised by a formal equality before law. A violent reaction
was inevitable. With Marx came the first blow and with the fascists, the
second. Both retained dictatorship in some theoretical form to transcend
the disintegrating fractures proposed by the liberal divide charted
according to the registers of the state/society and public/private division.
But this unity could not be forged artificially for that second time;
divorced from the person of the king, it could never be de-differentiated
again. The private and the public could never come again in the person-al
figure of the king. The language used to deplore dictatorship is charted in
these terms and history perhaps proves the anachronism of such experi-
ments.

   To repeat, the public private once upon a time were united and that in
the body of the sovereign monarch. Post-anti-absolutist movements and
the rise of liberal capitalism bifurcated this simple and once divided they
were never to meet again. Any attempt in this direction and that too in
the times after its sovereign times are over has to meet with the
reprobation that assumes the form of a strong outright, severe rejection
even without a dialogue, of the dictatorial imago.

But this narrative has its ruptures: somewhere in the middle of this
nowhere, someone like Gandhi would invoke 'an hour' of dictatorship to
transcend 'evils' that are genealogically aligned with peaceful leisure, by
prohibiting them forcibly without compensation. But alas only an hour!
Not wrongly, because this springs from Gandhi's own idea of 'not more
than what is strictly needed' (Gandhi 1960b: 7) an idea which is behind
the strong notion of voluntary poverty resurrected with lovely force by
some critical neo-Gandhians. Is Gandhi's dictatorship of one hour in-
scribed within such an economy? Let us examine by way of conclusion.

Conclusion

The well-established view that Gandhi wanted the public and the private
to be the echoes of each other is, if I am correct, stands demolished. But
this is to endorse the point of their irreconcilability only and Gandhi was
at times within this paradigm. In fact, Gandhi is rather suspicious of the
radical translation the two categorical sets (public/private and state/
society) might entail: 'public woman' or 'private rights' (and his distrust
of the liberal language of rights is all the more evident here). He finds
them as obstacles not to be diluted by means of the politics of pure
means – his brand of what he calls 'adult education.' Not because it is
amidst non-violent peace tied to leisure itself that all unproductive
excessive practices like 'drinking' and 'perverse sexuality' blossom.
Non-violence cannot annihilate, therefore, the 'evils' that originate on its
own land.

Gandhi's own means of non-violence, therefore, rendered paralysed,
very rightly he would transcend them by means of dictatorship (again,
this is a structural comment and not reflexive of the Gandhian discourse
in general). Dictatorship because '... the Führer is no longer an office in
the sense of traditional public law, but rather something ['a whole body
that is neither private nor public'] that springs forth without mediation
from his person' (Agamben 1998: 184). If we want to connect it to its
past, dictatorship is the modernist transformation of the monarch: Trans-
forming a Hegelian discursive fragment, he is 'a person, but the solitary
person who stands over against all the rest' [constituting] 'the real
authoritative universality of that person' [which is] 'but a natural result
of the personal hunt for content and determinateness'... 'their impotent'
'self consciousness is the defenceless enclosed arena of their tumult'...
[whose] 'activities and self enjoyment are equally monstrous excesses'
(Hegel 1998: 292-93). But a rider: Gandhi requires this monstrous excess
to counter the excess induced by drinking not as an instance of his own
emotional pathology, but as the re-enactment of an indispensable,

unconscious structural genealogy. The modern dictator tries to absorb or override, or forcibly transcend the public/private and state/society divisions, but fails; fails because once the divisions have been made and they having emerged with their own irreconcilable validity claims, they survive on their differences. They cannot be mutated as one in the post-bifurcation times. They were one in the person of the monarch who did not have to unite them synthetically like the modern dictator. He was the original *habitus* of the division where they peacefully and practically slept as one; origin of all values – his voice was conscience, his speech, law. Today, this monstrous excess of the person would be too strongly condemned and denounced by the help of divisions that originated in him (say, the *protection of society* or the *protection of privacy*). Gandhi understands this and inspired by his economy calls for an 'hour' of dictatorship.

An hour, but only an hour! But this hour must be a very lonely hour and loneliness, put in brief, is terrible temporality. And now if we are convinced of the causes and consequences of this terrible temporality, so to say, we must think twice while invoking transparency in public and private life by calling for an integration through investigation with the help of technologies of the self ('conscience') or a tele-visual technology of the sting operation (the proverbial spy cam), or whatever. This pursuit and trap could be elided only when we take Gandhi's exhortation and attempt in an over-grasping spiritual sense without distinctions. Admitting this partly (because our reading is a political one, faithful not to the authorial intentions, and it may not have been approved by Gandhi), we might conclude that Gandhi both sets up and eludes this trap, by which Gandhi attracts us even now, more than anybody else.

Notes

1. The outside and the inside founded by a myth were perpetuated by dialectics 'of division' later to be translated in their corresponding, taxonomic correlation: public

outside, private inside. The most profound theorist of the founding myth, to my mind, has been Jean Hyppolite, who is said to have spoken of 'a first myth of outside and inside' where 'you feel the full significance of this myth of outside and inside in alienation, which is founded on these two terms'. If that has been the mythical appropriation, the dialectics of inside/outside is foregrounded in a dark intimacy; they are themselves not distant, 'outside and inside are both intimate'. The dialectical dissolution of this myth is driven by a blasting of this marginal, territorial space of intimacy demarcating nearly a threshold of being/non-being, 'And then onto what, toward what, do doors open? Do they open for the world of men, or for the world of solitude? Ramon Gomez de la Serna wrote: "Doors that open on the countryside seem to confer freedom behind the world's back?"' (Bachelard 2000: 152, 155, 159). One might justly conjecture that the outside and inside are united in the door pre-empting the dialectic of private/public to be dissolved in the person.

2. Quoting Rousseau, "'I've said a hundred times, if ever I were confined in the Bastille, it's there that I would draw the picture of Liberty"', Marshall Berman concludes that this was an attempt to free ' "the head" from subjection to "things as they are" — but only by detaching it from the body, which remained confined in the Bastille. It split men in two, and so diverted their discontent from its source in their lives' (1970: 109). Thus, integrating the mind and body meant not only exercising the freedom of the mind, but also freeing the physico-material circumstance in which the physique or the body finds itself confined.

3. Though the origins of this integration could be meekly traced to Plato's Apology — where Socrates, being indicted for corrupting the youth, speaks in his defence: 'Throughout my life, in any public activity I may have engaged in, I am the same man as I am in private life' (Plato 1975: 35) — it must also be acknowledged that the Greek understanding of the private and the public only remotely resembles our modern understanding.

4. For Motilal Nehru's own version of the success of those events, see Nehru (1984: 45).

5. The cultural-cognitive self-understanding of the word 'public' or 'private' in the colonial or the post-colonial predicament, let us also note, did deviate from the standard western notions. While *public* started to mean *janta, aam admi*, etc., private meant *byaktigat, niji, apni*, etc., and quite mistakenly coalesced the personal and the private. (Arnab Chatterjee 2006: 215-31). My hunch is that Gandhi is deploying the word 'public man' in a very specific sense (stripped of its *aam*-mundane uses imminent in its Indian translation), which must be gotten from the western inventory. But this is no limitation. Such manoeuvres are strangely creative with Gandhi — recall the way he deployed Carpenter, Ruskin, Thoreau, and Tolstoy, all in the service of an indigenous 'defamiliarisation' (Partha Chatterjee 1986: 98-100).

6. And in this sense only — I assume — Gandhi could be called religious: 'religion exists once the secret of the sacred, orgiastic, or demonic mystery has been, if not destroyed, at least *integrated*, and finally subjected to the sphere of responsibility' (Derrida 1995: 2; italics mine).

7. For an initial philosophical account of the discourse of integrity, see Alan Montefiore (1999). Montefiore describes integrity as being inscribed within a larger discourse of 'essential identity' and how such integration is always deferred and incomplete. A classical example of this is perhaps available in Nietzsche 'when it really happens that the just man remains just even toward those who have harmed him' (1989: 74). The quoted Gandhian sentence in the text 'we may not return anger but gentleness even against anger' (Gandhi 1996: 113) is reflexive of integrity as essential identity in Gandhi. The result, as a comment on both the above, I speculate, would be this:

there will always be some people (and Gandhi was often reproached for this) who will still feel let down even by an integrated person, who, going by the indices of an essential, integrated identity is not supposed to let others down. Gandhi uses the word 'compromise' to designate this change of prior position. A person of Gandhian integrity – à la Gandhi – would 'admit of no compromise' in the face of eternal principles; and 'must be prepared to displease the dearest ones for the sake of principles' *(ibid.:* 191). And when, compellingly, compromises are made. Gandhi considers this as a moment of exception not to be recommended to others *(ibid.).*

While Gandhi's uncompromising position on 'universal principles' resolves the issue emphatically, for once, it does agree with the Kantian categorical imperative. The philosophical discussion on this, however, has just started to recognise Gandhi in a serious philosophical light (Akeel Bilgrami's work [2003] has been seriously instrumental here.) Being unaware of Gandhi, however, Montefiore (1999) as a theorist of integrity as identity, thinks, taking full responsibility of an acknowledged change of position would do the job here. But the same strategy could be easily deployed by an immoral person, too. (This was my position then; now what I think is this: Gandhi seems to have been perceptively aware of this in rejecting this resolution.) Some think this paradox could be avoided when an 'I' is integrated into 'we' accounts. An examination of this proposal is beyond the scope of this paper, yet, I am sure, Gandhi would disapprove of this position, too.

8. While I have previously pointed out at the Greek availability of private/public integration, how the problem of integration at the level of the individual person became a modern problematic is an interesting and intriguing case to note. In a perceptive history of the western public man, Richard Sennett (1976) informs how the molecule public/private broke the moment individual character was used to form a social principle. 'From this idea of individual personality as a social principle came ultimately the modern impulse to find political measures worthwhile only to the extent that their champions are "credible", "believable", "decent" persons' *(ibid.:* 105).

9. This is also a welcome reminder when we subject Gandhi to many western social science paradigms. While it is true that the *western colonial predicament* and the consequent displacements it ushered in India could not be explained fully by indigenous theory, let us rehearse that the same could not be accomplished by western social theory either; often the indigenous and the vernacular acted as a site of resistance to the western invasion of apparatus and ideology. Thus, the choice in this sense is 'political' and not simply heuristic. Today, to redescribe this juncture, we must recall the intense *hybrid* nature of that encounter and its resultant. While we subject Gandhi to western social science paradigms, we must always be sensitive to the transformation they have had to undergo in his hands. It would be safer then to articulate Gandhi *in between* non-violence and *ahimsa; vrata* and vow, *satya* and truth, etc. But I must confess that I have not been able to live up to this complicated deconstructive manoeuvre in this article always, though I have put up cautionary notices here and there (see En 5 in this regard).

10. While State and Society could be transposed to stand for Public (State) and Private (Society) and a gamut of interrelated thinking could be predictably charted, their inter-textual co-originality should not be undermined. Here is an excerpt from a monumental, classis work:

> When men tried to interpret the State as a 'society', they were borrowing the term *societas* from Roman Private Law. When they tried to interpret government as the exercise of an authority which had been delegated by the 'society', they were

borrowing the conception of *mandatum* from the same source. These were matters of the borrowing of private-law terms and conceptions and their application to the sphere of public law. In other words, what was involved was the use of the rules of law relating to private groups and private activities in the state to explain the character and the activity of the State itself. Difficulties naturally arose....from this transference of the ideas of one sphere to explain the life of another (Barker 1950: xxi).

11. This is not to undermine the possible world of a psycho-biographical or a personality psychological or psychoanalytical study of Gandhi. David Hardiman (2003), in executing an exercise of historical biography of Gandhi and connecting comparative time, does notice (elsewhere in the book) how the shadow of the Führer was lodged always above and inside the heads of Gandhi and his disciples. And yet he only arrives at this instance below but fails to give it the context that I give here; the implications should, however, be clear to the reader.

A year later, Harilal and Gulab were married. Gandhi told him to return to South Africa alone, but instead Harilal came with his new wife. Gandhi resented the obvious love the couple had for each other, and tried to *take her in hand in an authoritarian way*, causing her great emotional suffering. He was very annoyed when she became pregnant and later gave birth to a daughter, as this revealed that the couple were having sexual intercourse despite his injunction. He punished them by demanding that Harilal be the first to court arrest and go to jail during the *satyagraha* of 1908. Gandhi acted as his lawyer during his trial, insisting before the judge that the punishment should be as severe as possible. In a public statement made a week later, he said that his twenty-year-old son was "only a child" and that it was "a part of Harilal's education to go to gaol for the sake of the country". Harilal spent nearly a year in prison in all, constantly anxious about Gulab. He had good reason to be, for *Gulab developed an alarming cough, excruciating earache and sores all over her body* (*ibid.*: 98-99; italics mine).

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Book Reviews

Bhibhuti Bhushan Mallick: *Poverty in India: Fundamental issues.* New Delhi: Mittal Publication, 2009, xvi + 190 pp., Rs 495 (hb). ISBN 81-8324-283-9

The book under review seeks to address the fundamental issues of poverty in India, focusing on the case of Kalahandi district, Orissa. It has seven chapters dealing with various social science conceptualisations of poverty, the poverty situation in India, various measures of poverty alleviation, and the nature and causes of poverty in Orissa, specifically Kalahandi district.

The aim of the book, as stated in the introduction, is to link macro structures with micro analysis. The author claims that poverty is an integral feature of the Third World countries. According to him, though India has large number of people living below poverty line, one can argue that Indian state is committed to poverty alleviation, which is reflected in the plethora of anti-poverty programmes implemented by it.

In the second chapter the author problematises the concept of poverty and argues that one has to focus on 'poverty' holistically and not get trapped into equating poverty with poverty-line. He links poverty with lack of access to health and education. Further, in this chapter, he discusses various theories in sociology of poverty such as vicious circle theory, stages of growth theory (W.W. Rostow), culture and sub-culture theory (Oscar Lewis and David Matza), institutional theory (Gunnar Myrdal), functional and Marxist approaches to poverty. The point to be noted is that the author has described in detail the various theories but does not appear to have *engaged* with them. Further, he has not clearly stated the theoretical perspective through which the 'fundamental issues of poverty' in India are analyzed and presented in the book.

In chapter 3, the author claims that 'poverty' needs to be considered broadly, taking into consideration issues of social exclusion, education, health care, and civil and political rights. But the author has not given

any directions on how to integrate them. In this chapter, the author also makes a reference to differences in poverty estimates of government agencies and other national and international development organisations. There is a sentence on the negative impact of market reforms on people.

In chapter 4, titled 'Poverty alleviation measures in India', the author focuses on the major anti-poverty programmes and he lists thirty-four of them implemented by the Indian state. He argues that, as 'poverty is mainly found in rural areas', almost all poverty alleviation programmes are related to rural development and he discusses few wage and self-employment schemes.

After discussing the terrain of poverty, in chapters 5 and 6, the author focuses on the socio-economic profile of the study area, the state of Orissa and one of its districts, Kalahandi. The central argument in these chapters is that poverty in Kalahandi district is due to geo-political factors which needs to be focused. According to the author, conditions such as perennial droughts and scarce rainfall are made worse by in-effective state action, lack of entitlement to land ownership, persistence of low wages, vanishing cottage and small-scale industries in those areas. In conclusion, the author argues that poverty in Kalahandi district must be viewed in its social and structural perspective, especially focusing on lack of effective land reforms.

The author has made a good effort at problematising the concept of 'poverty', but he has failed to critically engage with the existing poverty debate. The objective of the book as stated in the introduction, namely, to link the macro policies of the government to the experiences of poverty at the district and village levels has hardly been achieved.

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B.S. Baviskar and Tusli Patel (eds.): *Understanding Indian society: Past and present – Essays for A.M. Shah.* New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2010, viii + 378, pp., Rs 695 (hb). ISBN 978-81-250-3845-0

Arvindbhai Manilal Shah, former Professor of Sociology at the Delhi School of Economics, occupies a unique position in Indian sociology. His interest in sociological research dates back to his undergraduate days when he got an opportunity to be associated with M.N. Srinivas during his fieldwork in Rampura. From then on, he has consistently researched and published in various areas of sociology/social anthropology: kinship, family, caste, village, religion, and culture. His major contribution to

Indian sociology has been bringing fieldwork to the centre of teaching and research activities and sensitising us to the importance of historical perspective for sociological understanding. In honour of this outstanding teacher, research supervisor, and academic administrator, in the present volume, his students, colleagues, and friends have put together thirteen essays, besides an elaborate introduction detailing his academic contributions and an epilogue sketching his biography.

The volume is divided into four parts. Part I deals with gender relations. Based on case studies of five Muslim women in Delhi and an understanding of life-cycle rituals in the Muslim community such as *aqiqah, bismillah, burqa* and *dastarkhwan,* Mohini Anjum rejects the usual portrayal of Muslim women as being docile, submissive, and subjugated. She argues that Muslim women are quite articulate, assertive, and independent in different ways in their lives, and they have been able to create space for themselves and make their voices heard in an otherwise patriarchal and closed society.

Tulsi Patel's paper, based on data collected by the Grameen Bank about Bangladeshi Muslim women, radically differs from Anjum's. Patel argues that the Muslim women, caught in a complex situation created by poverty, religion, and patriarchy, face miserable conditions and harsh dilemmas while trying to meet the conflicting demands and struggling to break out of the structural forces that shape their relentless oppression. She discusses women's agential capacity to bring about a little change in their life through the micro-credit programmes of the Grameen Bank, and presents the poignant everyday life experiences of Muslim women.

Based on the colonial records on sex ratios among different castes, L.S. Vishwanath shows that female infanticide was a mechanism for maintaining caste status. Regarding castes such as Rajputs, Kanbis, Lewa Patidars, Jats, Ahirs, Gujars, and Khutris, he argues that the castes that practised hypergamous marriages resorted to extensive female infanticide during the 19th century because such marriages involved substantial dowry payment to the groom's side.

Part II is about religion or religion-based phenomena. Based on a study of around 1,000 laity in Mangalore, Alphonsus D'Souza opines that, it is particularly due to modernisation after the Second Vatican Council, the laity's perception of the role of Catholic priests has changed. Majority of the laity believe that the priests, apart from performing purely cultic or ritualistic functions, should actively work for the welfare of the people by providing leadership in socio-cultural and political areas.

Media reports on the communal riots in Gujarat in 1992 constitute the data base of the paper by Lancy Lobo and Bishwaroop Das. The

paper narrates the incidents of riots and argues that different state-based newspapers approached and reported the riot differently. For example, *Gujarat Samachar* was very critical of the progressive secular people and castigated them as 'pseudo-secularists', and it claimed that the riot was caused chiefly by the Godhara incident. Whereas *Gujarat Today* suggested that the riot was an outcome of the overall legitimisation of communal and criminalised politics.

The paper by Ragini Shah claims to contradict Max Weber's thesis on religion and development by presenting an ethnographic study of a Hindu organisation, 'Muni Seva Ashram'. By narrating the social work initiated and completed by the Ashram, she argues that Hinduism is equally concerned with this-worldly activities.

Part III talks about the issues of cultural dimension of development, agro-industrial cooperatives, Indian diaspora, and informed consent in medical practice. T. Scarlett Epstein's paper, which is based on diverse field experiences, brings out the cultural dimension of the problem of development by reasoning that since in Asian or African countries wisdom and experience are positively related with age, the development planners must create space for the grandparents in their scheme of things because they can be mediators in the process of production and their views can prove to be a fruitful lesson for development workers.

The paper by B.S. Baviskar and D.W. Attwood shows the significant roles of co-operatives in the promotion of agro-based industrialisation in rural areas. Once it happens, they argue, other forms of industry follow the process. Such industrialisation is more beneficial to rural people because it is led by the institution of co-operatives.

P.J. Patel and Mario Rutten's piece presents, in a historical perspective, the sociological dynamics of the Patidar diaspora in central London. The Patidars settled in London after they were driven out from African countries. The paper shows that in order to maintain their identity and culture the diasporic Patidars have built Hindu temples, publicly and consistently perform rituals and celebrate festivals, run a centre to teach Gujarati language to the younger generation, and visit villages in central Gujarat to maintain and strengthen their social or kinship relations and practice including the traditional pattern of marriage. It also spells out the changes which are occurring in the diaspora in terms of the dilemmas that the younger Patidars are facing.

The paper by Aneeta Minocha argues that there is a cultural dimension to the practice of informed consent in India, because family or kin groups of the patient play major role in it. The paper presents the hotly debated doctrine of informed consent along with the repercussions it will

have for the empowerment of patient and consequently in changing the traditional doctor-patient relationship.

The last part is devoted to some disciplinary concerns. The paper by André Béteille provides an analysis of two important conceptualisations of kinship, conventionally known as 'elementary unit of kinship' and 'atom of kinship'. Contrary to the widely held belief that the 'atom of kinship' is conceptually more perfect, he argues that 'elementary unit of kinship' is more inclusive and provides clear guidelines in the empirical investigation of kinship and in ordering of complex and seemingly incongruous data.

Rajni Palriwala presents a case study of the Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, to explore the dynamics of engendering of a social science syllabus. The paper argues that though the department has become gender sensitive over the last two decades, gender-sensitive writings are still asked to prove themselves conceptually and empirically good enough to be included in the syllabus.

The paper by Shanti George argues for creating space for children in anthropological research by accepting a child as an ethnographic participant. She believes that children can prove to be a rich source of relevant and creative information, and it is important to know the life-world of children, a very important section of the household, through their vision and version.

Like Shah's works, the papers in this festschrift are appealing, creative, and thought-provoking, and are based on field and/or historical data. These papers are a testimony to the great influence that Shah's works command in contemporary sociological/social anthropological scholarship in India.

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David N. Gellner (ed.): *Ethnic activism and civil society in South Asia (Governance, conflict and civic action: Volume 2).* New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2009, viii + 367 pp., Rs 750 (hb). ISBN 978-81-321-0096-7

'Civil society' is one of the most contested social science concepts. What constitutes civil society and what are its broad contours, are some of the questions which continue to engage the attention of scholars. While some would exclude religious, ethnic, and nationalist assertions and movements from the purview of civil society, as these are not 'liberal, secular,

civil and democratic in orientation', others would contend that in 'heterogeneous, hierarchical and plural societies, identity groups are legitimate inhabitants of civil society'.

The volume under review takes a bold and clear but contentious position, after tracing the trajectory of the idea of civil society in the Introduction, that, in the context of South Asia, the various identity movements that have taken place should legitimately be viewed as constituting the essence of civil society, as they have demonstrated liberatory, emancipatory, and empowering potential.

The volume is a collection of ten articles on various forms of ethnic activism in India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. It is divided into three broad sections. Section I deals with the growth of Hindu nationalist movement in western and central India, following the involvement of its leaders in the local civil society initiatives. The article by Minoru Mio looks at the growing activism of local youth organisations in terms of starting new festivals and functions and the nexus that has developed between them and the Hindu nationalist organisations. This has helped them to construct aggressively what it means to be a Hindu and Hindu identity.

Peggy Froerer begins by making a plea for contextualising the meaning of civil society. She then examines the activities of RSS in the forested region of Chhattisgarh in terms of ensuring improved access to biomedical treatment options and the enforcement of state accountability to the tribes inhabiting the region and, in the process, winning the confidence of tribal people and spreading their influence. The argument advanced by Froerer for including RSS within the sphere of civil society is that it has contributed to the promotion of citizens' rights and good governance.

The two articles in Section II deal with how the transnational connections help in defining the ethnic identity in sharper terms. Eva Gerharz looks at the growing involvement of Tamil diaspora (whose size has considerably increased following the turbulence in Sri Lanka) in the reconstruction process. Their involvement has contributed greatly to the sharpening of Tamil identity, apart from other social changes it has led to. However, at times it leads to some simmering tensions between them and the local Tamils. For example, the 'western culture' represented by the Tamil diaspora is something that is accepted with a certain amount of discomfort by the older Tamil generation.

Sara Shneiderman examines the dynamics of identity construction of Thangmis in Nepal and India. She explains in great detail how identity formation in these two countries differs because of differing socio-political contexts. Whereas in Nepal, issues of basic rights and social welfare are central to Thangmis, the issue of cultural preservation

assumes paramount importance in India, which has a substantial Thangmi population in Darjeeling (West Bengal) in terms of developing a distinctive identity and making corresponding claims on the Indian state with the policy of reservation adding poignancy to the process. The reservation system in India determines the way in which the Thangmi ethnic identity is articulated here.

The three articles in Section III deal with the question of oppression of dalits and the growing activism by them to liberate themselves from the structure of exploitation. Hugo Gorringe focuses on the emergence of Liberation Panthers in Tamil Nadu that is deeply involved in empowering the dalits. The visible tension between the particularistic discourse of dalit oppression and the universal discourse of Tamil nationalism and the efforts made to reconcile the two are dealt with in this article. David Mosse looks at the phenomenon of dalits getting converted into Christianity in an attempt to free themselves from the stigma attached to their traditional status in the Hindu caste system. It is, however, noted that even after the conversion, their status has not improved much and they continue to be caught up in the institutionalised pattern of caste discrimination in the Catholic Church.

The focus then shifts to Nepal where dalit activism has been a prominent sociological aspect of Nepalese society. Significant changes have occurred in terms of an increase in their political representation and growing cultural self-confidence due to efforts made by dalit non-governmental organisations and also through individual acts of resistance. However, certain constraints are imposed on dalit activism by the legal and institutional structure of the state; these constraints are discussed by Laurie Ann Vasily.

Section IV deals exclusively with the situation in Nepal. Gisele Krauskopff's article makes an interesting reading as it engages itself with a critical study of the writings of two Tharu intellectuals which are taken 'as a whole, as practices and as a discourse' that seek to reconstruct the history of Tharus. Focus on the written texts offers a fresh perspective in understanding the evolution of Tharu identity. Mukta Tamang discusses the evolution of Tamang identity based on territorial consciousness around Tamsaling. The role played by the movement activists in constructing territorial claims, which form the basis of self-definition, is enunciated. Conceptual aspects relating to nation and how the various ethnic social units within Nepal are constructing themselves as nations is the focus of attention in the last article by Marie Lecomte-Tilouine.

This volume would be of interest to the students of civil society, ethnicity and politics. One appreciable thing that gets noticed easily is the uniformly lucid style of presentation of rich empirical material and

conceptual issues in the entire volume, which is rare to find in an edited book. One, however, remains somewhat dissatisfied with the fact that though ethnic assertions and movements are represented as constituting civil society, the arguments advanced for this are not clearly spelt out. One wishes that the case for including ethnic movements as part of civil society was made after a more nuanced argument than one finds in the Introduction to the book.

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Gopal Sarana: *Explorations in method and theory in anthropology.* Jaipur: Rawat Publications, 2008, xviii + 470 pp., Rs 950 (hb). ISBN 81-316-0163-3

The book under review brings together twenty-four of Gopal Sarana's articles published over a period of fifty years. The foundation of scholarship in Sarana was laid by eminent anthropologists: D.N. Majumdar in Lucknow University and Cora DuBois in Harvard University. In a succinct foreword, Subba Reddy introduces Sarana and this book:

> Among the anthropologists in India and abroad, Dr. Sarana stands out as one among the rare few whose reach extends to the terse areas of methodological issues, philosophical problems, epistemological queries, logical procedures and scientific frames of analysis, applicable to social sciences in general and social anthropology in particular. All this comes out very prominently in this volume (p. xi).

The book is divided into six sections overlaid by an Introduction that carves a niche for each article. The first section titled 'On Functionalism' comprises four articles revolving around the philosophical foundation of functionalism, interrelationship between issues of causality and functionalism, and the contributions of Bronislaw Malinowski and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown. In one article Sarana revisits the concepts of manifest and latent functions along with the very examples that Robert K. Merton used (namely, Hopi rain-dance ceremonial, the Hawthorne and Western Electric Studies case, and others) to explain them. He concludes, 'the distinction which Merton has laboriously tried to make between "manifest" and "latent" function is redundant' (p. 70).

The four articles in the second section, 'On Structure and Structuralism' thematically relate with the previous one. The concept of

function, particularly in the writings of Radcliffe-Brown and many others discussed in the first section, forms the cornerstone of articles on social structure which is the core issue of the second one. Through a series of logical arguments he challenges the very foundation on which the distinction between social structure and social organisation is constructed, more so in the writings of, among others, Raymond Firth, S.F. Nadel, and Radcliffe-Brown.

This is followed by an article on model and myth in the anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss which begins with developing an understanding of 'model' and theory as a constructs in anthropology. The insight is then employed to interrogate the proposition of social structure as a model by Lévi-Strauss. He infers, 'Lévi-Strauss deserves credit for making anthropologists "model conscious". In his account, he means by a model, at different places, a reality, an explanation of phenomenon or even a method. His home-made models ... are not models at all' (p. 126).

Expectedly, Sarana discusses the influence of linguistics on anthropology lucidly. He maintains that the basic ideas behind 'structuralism' in linguistics and 'functionalism' in anthropology are quite similar. Drawing from Lévi-Strauss, he discusses the method of structural analysis in another article. The articles in the section bring to the fore the sharp contrast between Lévi-Strauss's emphasis on understanding unconscious structure underlying all institutions and customs based on the premise that 'reason imposes forms upon content which is the same for all the people whether they are primitive or civilized' (p. 6) and Radcliffe-Brown's contention of social structure as real and rooted in existing social relations.

The third and fourth sections, 'On Anthropological Methods' and 'On Comparative Method', are constituted of three and five articles respectively. The articles in both the sections establish the distinctiveness of anthropological methods in the larger canvas of social sciences. In Sarana's words,

> Other social scientists, including sociologists and psychologists, are dismayed by the lack of interest in scientific procedure and objectivity in anthropological inquiry. In these subjects attempt is made to adopt the hypothetico-deductive method of the natural sciences or an adaptation of it. The anthropologist knows that the elimination of social variables to devise investigation on the lines of the experimental design of the natural sciences is not feasible in social studies, in general, and anthropological studies in particular. It will not be an exaggeration to say that methodologically-speaking anthropology is different (p. 7).

The two subsequent sections, 'On [Ethnographic] Re-Interpretation' and 'On Concept Clarification', address some of the basic and perhaps most intriguing issues in anthropology such as, among others, nature and scope of marriage across cultures, person-to-person relations, nuances of anthropological explanation, idealism and nomo-thetic social anthropology, and rituals of rebellion. One of the most interesting articles is 'Do anthropologists explain?' Here Sarana begins with the philosophical perspective with focus on the logic of scientific explanation expounded by Carl Hempel who referred to it as 'deductive-nomological explanation' and Scriven's 'pattern' model of explanation. He goes on to discuss structural explanation, the logic of contextual explanation, and cross-cultural comparison.

What makes the book useful is not only a critical appraisal of the contribution of classical theorists to specific themes, but also the way in which the author churns each of them to surface core ideas and weave them together to develop fully fledged theoretical premises. The strength of the book, as I see, lies in highlighting the nuanced connection between ideas, and, in doing so, providing a critique of each theoretical premise. This is certainly not a text for beginners in the discipline of anthropology but one for the matured, well-grounded students and academics engaged in the pursuit of anthropological knowledge in a particular sense and social sciences in a general sense.

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J.V. Vilanilam: *Development communication in practice: India and the millennium development goals.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2009, xx + 272 pp., Rs 450 (pb). ISBN 978-81-321-0065-2

It is an academically rewarding experience to go through this insightful work of J.V. Vilanilam. His study is a breakthrough in media research. The merits of the book lies in highlighting that an understanding of development issues is vital in media research and in developing guidelines for development communication practitioners and in showing the ways to disseminate information to the public. One of the challenges taken up by Vilanilam is the engagement of scholarship to portray the case of one's own geographical and cultural contexts, namely, Kerala and India. The result of the study is an indication of the commitment and dedication of Vilanilam to media studies that he has been engaged in for the last thirty years. The message that he gives to the reader is that there

is need (a) to move from the conventional approach used by the media specialists, who shape their understanding of development communication from the view of dominant western paradigm and (b) to focus on the actual conditions prevailing in their own environment. The foreword by John A. Lent adds greater academic weight to the book.

Well-grounded, documented and elaborated in seven chapters, the book dwells on economic growth, development, and globalisation and development communication in practise. Vilanilam argues that the role of development communicators is to examine carefully whether there is any injustice against the poor in matters of development, industrialisation, and modernisation. The role of development communicators is not just reporting events in an objective manner, but to act as a bridge between the people and the government. For the development communicator, a thorough grounding in the priorities of the area to be developed and the needs of the citizen is essential. Furthermore, Vilanilam says, they must be aware that development communication is only a medium, a tool, not an end product, and that development itself is not a one-time activity, but a continuous process to be sustained with continuous efforts.

Vilanilam identifies the issues to be discussed in terms of economic development as food and nutrition, health, education, population, and the place of women in society. He examines from seven Indian newspapers, particularly those published from Kerala – *Desaabhimini, The Hindu, The New Indian Express, Kerala Kaumadhi, Maadhyamam, Malayala Manorama*, and *Mathrubhumi* – the extent of attention given to these matters and the priorities of these newspapers. The study shows that, in all the seven newspapers, development news gets the lowest priority. He concludes by saying that it is high time that development thinkers stop equating development with economic growth.

The book has raised several questions and will be useful guide for social scientists; development communication practitioners, policy makers, media researchers, and ordinary citizens eager to be 'superior human beings' and not 'superior commodities'. The comprehensive bibliography will be a useful reference for future researchers. The appendices will be a useful guide for those development communicators looking forward for a change in their perspective and innovative practices in the dissemination of news.

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Kanchan Chopra and C.H. Hanumantha Rao (eds.): *Growth, equity, environment and population: Economic and sociological perspectives (Institute of Economic Growth; Studies in economic and social development no. 69).* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2008, xx + 465 pp., Rs 1500 (hb). ISBN 978-0-7619-3677-0

Published as the 69th volume in the Institute of Economic Growth (IEG) Series on *Studies in Economic and Social Development,* this volume is dedicated to late Professor V.K.R.V. Rao – founder of IEG – on the occasion of his Birth Centenary. The occasion also marked the Golden Jubilee of the Institute of Economic Growth. The editors have called this "a representative collection of the work of researchers at the IEG in the last few years". The Institute has been on the forefront of Economic research and has influenced, in several ways, India's economic policy. One of its directors was the Principal Adviser to Indira Gandhi. Our present Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, has been the Chairman of its Governing Board. The works of some of the luminaries are presented in this collection, though there are notable absences such as A.M. Khusro, Ashish Bose, and P.C. Joshi.

As the name of the Institute suggests, its key emphasis has been on economic growth and, as must be expected, most of the work is in the field of economics and demography, and with the dominant economistic perspective. As the editors themselves acknowledge: 'The discerning reader will find a predilection towards the use of econometric techniques of analysis, use of time series analysis, macroeconomic modelling, simulation modelling, distance functions, simultaneous equation models, multinomials and the like'. And this is proclaimed to be the forte of the Institute.

Though the Institute has some positions for sociology, there seems to be lack of interdisciplinary orientation. Of the twenty-five chapters in the book, there are only two which are classified as sociological and put in a separate section. There are two others, by Amita Baviskar and Arup Mitra, which can be called sociological, but they figure in sections on environment and on population and health.

The book is divided into five sections devoted to Growth, Equity, Environment, Population and Health, and Sociological Perspectives related to Religion and Family. Interestingly, only the last section is devoted to 'perspective', other sections appear to be substantive! For sociologists and social anthropologists, this book has, therefore, limited interest. The tone of the articles penned by sociologists is very different from the papers done by the economists and economist-turned demographers.

The contribution of these papers on economic growth is marginal. Because of its overemphasis on economic analysis, the readers of this book will most likely ignore the essays of this section. And social scientists other than economists may not feel encouraged to buy, or even to read this book; the algebraic expressions and quantifications may discourage them.

For sociologists, however, the articles by T.N. Madan, Patricia Uberoi, and Amita Baviskar are of interest and they would read them with profit ignoring the rest of the chapters of the book. Madan's paper on sociology of Hinduism cogently summarises the key contributions of M.N. Srinivas — particularly his concepts of *spread* and of *sanskritisation* – and Max Weber. Though a commendable précis of the sociological approach to religion, its inclusion in this kind of anthology seems somewhat misplaced. Uberoi's essay is a commentary on the United Nations International Year of the Family, and a brief comparison of the situation of India and China, but there is no sociological perspective. Amita Baviskar's essay is in the nature of a case study, but with loud overtones of an activist; it is, however, a good read.

If sociology has to claim a position in research related to economic growth and development on a par with economists, who had monopolised the territory all these years and are announcing to maintain this as their forte, then we would need much stronger case than what is offered by these three essays. The book clearly displays insularity amongst the social sciences that has hurdled a genuine interdisciplinary approach.

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Prem Chowdhry (ed.): *Gender discrimination in land ownership* (Land reforms in India, Volume 11). New Delhi: Sage Publications India, 2009, xxxv + 314 pp., Rs 795 (hb). ISBN 978-81-7829-942-6

Issue of disinheritance of women from land rights has been one of the central concerns of women's movements and women's studies in India. Right from the 1970s with Bodhgaya movement in Bihar and in the context of anti-dowry struggles, issues of discrimination against women with regard to land rights have been raised by women's groups. Over the last three decades, lot of literature has appeared examining the links between gender, land and property, kinship and cultural values, on the one hand, and women's rights within state and legal frameworks and personal laws, on the other. Studies have also consistently dwelled on

how and why land rights are so important in ameliorating women's situation.

The present work could be seen as a continuation of these concerns with a welcome exception of an active engagement of bureaucrats in understanding the issues at ground level and their interest in trying to build strategies for better implementation. The basic goal of these studies was to assess the current status of land reforms in India, but it has gone far beyond the mandate. Many academicians and bureaucrats were involved in the collection and processing of data from different states. As a result, an impressive volume with rich qualitative and quantitative data has come up, full of useful information and important insights from historical and contemporary trends on the relationship between women, their work and land ownership/disinheritance in the context of emergent patterns of burgeoning capitalist economy, migration, and legal contestations on the matter.

Prem Chowdhry provides an able and exhaustive introduction to seemingly varied situations. Some chapters are written by academicians who try to weave several themes together. While other articles, especially by administrators, provide descriptive information on Acts, their amendments, and other quantitative data. Some have case studies, others have none. There is an overall unevenness in the volume, leaving the reader to ask more in some chapters especially about the North East.

Given the enormity and diversity of nature of land and associated practices in the Indian context, the volume tries to capture the nuanced picture of heterogeneity with reference to differences in region, caste, religion, ethnicity, and gender. For instance, though patriarchal ideologies seem to be all pervasive and systematically disinherit most women, the distinct construction of gender relations with respect of south and north Indian kinship structures and marriage patterns provide variations in the way women have some autonomy in relation to work and relative ownership rights. The diversity among women is handled in most papers with reference to rights of widows, widows with children, only daughters, unmarried daughters, and the disabled.

The volume also dwells on variation on the nature of land and, Chowdhry asserts, it is usually the tenurial land which is at stake. The variations across states' tenurial laws and their versions of devolution of land have been in accordance to history, customs, and practices. Much attention is paid to Hindu Succession Act, 1956 (HSA) which tried to remove discriminatory practices, especially with regard to obliterating the difference between married and unmarried daughters and allowed right to her as an equal and absolute owner of the property, with full rights at her disposal. The differences however, are apparent in the way

each state tries to interpret 'custom and law in constituting policies. Discussion also dwells on differences in HSA and the Muslim personal law (Sharia) with regard to women's rights to property.

The chapters on Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, and Punjab (by Sethi) give an excellent account of gaps between laws, customs, and practices on the ground level. Spread of dowry and marriage-related consumption practices have been discussed in many chapters and also with regard to Muslims and Christians which seem to clearly work against any discussion on women's rights in land. Even though guaranteed by law (HSA) and personal laws (Sharia) very few women have actually claimed their rights. The force of filial and sibling loyalty and associated cultural values seem to overweigh their rights. Among the poor and uneducated, lack of awareness of legal rights is another issue. Communities governed by patriarchal customary laws, especially in the North East lie outside the purview of HSA and most are found to be clearly discriminating against women. They are disinherited despite the fact that they being the backbone of economy, the main cultivators and managers of land. Information, however, on these states is extremely sketchy.

The chapters on south India are also uneven. Kerala's case (by Kodoth) is an exhaustive historical account of the differences and changes in different parts of the state extending the argument further in terms of examining the implications of land reforms on women belonging to landed and landless castes and also the contemporary trends of diversification of occupations for men, whereas women lag behind. The chapters on Kerala and Meghalaya discuss with concern, the growing patriarchal tendencies and interpretations in matrilineal contexts, where, due to state intervention and capitalist economy, farming is no longer being treated as a privileged occupation. Women as cultivators thus stand dispossessed in social status.

Effects of male migration are another issue dealt by several chapters on women's access to land and rights in distribution of produce. The emergent picture is complex, not always favourable for women, as the land stills remains in the name of men. Social mobility, and education and employment options have been shown to have clear implications for women's work and changing status.

The role of state has been extremely important in trying to improve the situation of women with regard to landownership. It is clearly evident that state governments have taken several positive steps in this direction. Only one chapter discusses the bottlenecks faced by an administrator in pushing pro-women landownership policy in the district Khargone in Madhya Pradesh. Inclusion of more of such case studies would have

been useful in understanding change or lack of it at the ground level. The role of civil society organisations in studying, disseminating legal knowledge, and protesting and pushing for change in recent years has also been documented. Most chapters bring out issues of gender discrimination to the fore either through interpretation of Acts or through field studies. They not only provide useful information, but also make suggestions and recommendations for effective implementation. Overall, this book is a useful addition to the growing literature on the subject.

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Priti Singh (ed.): *Indigenous identity and activism.* Delhi: Shipra Publications, 2009, viii + 229 pp., Rs.550 (hb). ISBN 978-81-7541-488-4

Besides the introduction, the book has a collection of ten papers dealing with issues of identity of indigenous peoples and of their movements. Discussions are drawn from the examples of Latin America, Australia, and Canada. One paper focuses on human rights and indigenous peoples. The introduction highlights that the construction of indigenous identity and activism are a result of historical circumstances induced by colonialism and the modern state. The process of change brought about by such forces shaped the direction of the construction and articulation of indigenous identity by indigenous leaderships, groups, and organisations. The issue of land emerges as the core matter in the articulation of identity and movement.

The papers from Latin America focus on various aspects. Rodolfo Stavenhagen explains the 20th century policy of Mexico which is referred to as 'Indigenismo'. Indigenismo was an instrument of assimilation and integration of indigenous peoples (Indians) through state-directed developmental programmes. It is noted that, from the 1960s, the situation has been different because indigenous peoples and their organisations have taken up their own cause and demanded 'indigenous territorial autonomy', 'control over their natural resources', and socio-economic development. Carlos Montemayor points out that such movements are not new in Mexico, because indigenous peoples had fought against the Spanish colonialism in defence of their lands.

Federico Navarrete Linares discusses the contemporary situation in Mexico and reflects on the term 'Mestizos and Indians' and the indigenous movements. The Mestizos are known as 'Mixed blood'. This term 'applied to most Mexicans because they are held to be racially and

culturally descended from the pre-Columbian indigenous population of the country and from the Spanish conquerors and immigrants that have arrived since the Spanish conquest of the sixteenth century' (p. 53). The Indians 'are defined as the direct descendents of the pre-Columbian inhabitants of the country and are supposed to have maintained a racial and cultural continuity with their ancestors' (*ibid.*). This is the social context of the debates of articulation of indigenous peoples' identity and the demand for legal autonomy. It is pointed out that, in recent times, indigenous peoples' movements have also added the particularities of their culture in their construction of ethnic identities.

The papers on indigenous peoples of Brazil focus on 'territoriali-sation', rights and land, and the Federal Constitution of 1988. Joao Pachecode Oliviera discusses the process of territorialisation and shows that, in the 16th century, the indigenous peoples were clustered in religious missions under the authority of the Catholic Church, new language was imposed on them, and changes were introduced in their cultures and practices. Secondly, it is highlighted that by mid-18th century, the Catholic missionaries were expelled by the Portugese crown and indigenous peoples were re-settled in villages. Lastly, with the introduction of 'indigenist' policy in the 20th century, the Indians were given access to land and inter-cultural relations between the Indians and the local white population were promoted. It is added that by the 20th century indigenous peoples' movements had taken shape, and from the 1970s, indigenous peoples formed indigenous assemblies and took up the issue of land rights. Stephen G. Baines highlights the indigenous peoples' movements in the post-Federal Constitution of 1988. This Constitution gave the indigenous peoples rights to their land and abandoned the assimilation policy. It is argued that such Constitutional rights facilitated the indigenous movements to exert more pressure to consolidate their land claims.

In the context of Australia, the papers discuss some of the issues concerning the aboriginal people. Irene Watson explains the impact of colonisation and the process of privatisation of communal land. Another aspect that is highlighted is the challenges faced by the indigenous peoples of Australia with regard to Australian laws. Peter Gale focuses on the issue of violence in the remote areas inhabited by the indigenous communities. It is perceived that violence is an off-shoot of past policies adopted by the Government of Australia.

The situation of the indigenous peoples in Canada has been presented from the angle of 'language socialisation' and from the perspective of border and trans-border rights. Martha B. Crago, Betsy Annahatak, and Lizie Ningiuruk present the changing aspects in child-

rearing practices of indigenous peoples. They show that some of the child-rearing practices have been discontinued. The women of the elder generation are aware of the loss, but not so in the case of the younger married women. Broadly, the discontinuity and loss has been attributed to the change of life-styles in indigenous communities. Margery Fee examines the conceptual problem arising out of citizenship in modern state and the social membership of persons in indigenous confederacies.

Aswani K. Peetush highlights human rights and argues that, for indigenous peoples' movements, such rights have been the instrument for internationalising their agenda. It is also argued that the issue of individual rights has been a problematic one in the context of indigenous peoples. This is because the individual is not an independent entity in the social world of indigenous peoples.

The book is interesting because it not only deals with the debates on identity construction, but also seeks to establish the relation between indigenous peoples and the modern state.

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Renu Modi (ed.): *Beyond relocation: The imperative of sustainable resettlement.* New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2009, xxx + 432 pp., Rs 850. ISBN 978-81-321-0087-4

The problem of development-induced displacement is an excellent example of 'crisis of success'. Nowadays, development no longer seems so attractive in view of inherent ecological and environmental problems often leading to turmoil in socio-cultural fabric. Questions are raised about the efficacy of such development ventures, which are causing extensive damage to social, cultural, and economic milieu and are devastating the lives of millions of people. Academicians, scholars, and policy makers are uniting on the fact that development is in crisis and that there is an urgent ne ed to go 'beyond development' to find an effective solution to it. *Beyond Relocation* edited by Renu Modi is one such attempt to understand this problem in a comprehensive manner.

The book is broadly divided into three parts. The first part is a collection of four essays written by experts including Michael M. Cernea. This section addresses the theoretical proposition related to involuntary displacement and risks of human rights violation, and advocates a 'rights-centric' or 'people-centric' development paradigm. It argues that compensation policies, as practised now, are inadequate.

There is an urgent need for formulating a 'just policy' to ameliorate the risks involved in development-induced displacement.

The second section comprises seven articles based on studies conducted in India. This part challenges the doctrine of 'eminent domain' that forms the basis of expropriation laws – such as the Land Acquisition Act – which become perpetrators of the 'impoverishment risks' for millions of people. The state-wise statistics gathered on resettlement and rehabilitation by the researchers debunk the popularly propounded myth that development works for the betterment of all sections of society. About three quarters out of over 60 million oustees of development projects have not been rehabilitated so far. The national as well as state level and company-specific land acquisition acts are biased against the rights of the affected persons. As such, the victims endure powerlessness and can do nothing against such forced acquisition except lamenting their fate. By citing empirical narratives from development projects such as Bhakra Nangal, Sardar Sarovar, Tipaimukh, Pogalia dams and special economic zones in the country, the editor concludes that the fast track acquisition by the state that are accompanied by inadequate compensation, resettlement and rehabilitation have resulted in the socio-economic and cultural deprivation of the millions of uprooted persons.

The third part of the book is devoted to multi-country comparative empirical investigations, mainly from developing Asian and African countries, on the problem of forced relocation. For a comprehensive comparative understanding of the catastrophe of resettlement, the instance of France in the form of a developed country has also been considered in this section. The comparison portrays that worldwide there is large-scale concurrence and commonality in the modus operandi on development-led displacement. It results in uprooting of people across globe and invariably results in the degeneration of their socio-economic conditions. Development is intensely class based and gender biased in nature around the globe, and the nature and experiences of displacement and resettlement are comparable across countries.

While Modi has drawn from a large number of studies conducted by different social scientists to delineate a comparative picture of global resettlement and rehabilitation scenario, her analysis focuses on 'development of under-development' from the viewpoint of eightfold 'Impoverishment-Risks' model developed by Cernea – the man who shaped the rehabilitation policy of the World Bank. All except the eighth ('community disarticulation') of these risks of impoverishment falls in the broader domain of 'economic crisis'. To understand such a complex problem, we need to go beyond economics of crisis. Economic

impoverishment can be easily measured and eradicated, whereas socio-cultural and religious disarticulation remain invisible and cannot be assessed easily. The agony, anguish, humiliation, and frustration faced by project-displaced persons before, during, and after the process, can only be understood, felt, humanised, and empathised. We need to move beyond the economic-centric development paradigm and provide sufficient space and respect to socio-cultural and religious realities of affected communities while planning a development project.

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Subhash Sharma: *Why people protest: An analysis of ecological movement.* New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 2009, 227 pp., Rs 190 (pb). ISBN 978-81-230-1535-4

This book is an important study in the field of sociology of ecology that focuses on significant ecological issues of third world societies. Subhash Sharma's selection of six ecological movements in terms of context, cause, composition or participation, goal, mobilisation process, and control and outcome are interesting and relevant in critical life issues of people pertaining to forest and water in the third world countries. He highlights how when development creates or seems to be a threat to life of local people and their ecology, both ecological degradation and uneven development pave way for protest and movements. Using secondary data, Sharma develops 'multi dimensional critical dis-empowerment' vis-à-vis time-series approach to analyze ecological movements.

It is pertinent to mention that, in recent years, the developmental initiatives have endangered the life and livelihoods of indigenous people and created massive resentment among them. As part of the developmental drive, large dams are constructed across many rivers, thereby destroying forests without considering the symbiotic relationship between ecological infrastructure and animal and human species. The indigenous people are left with no alternative but to protest and call for justice. Civil society organisations engaged in environmental issues act as a catalyst to provide impetus to these movements at the global level. The book also focuses on several government initiatives that have been taken up in the last few decades, resulting in the creation of new ministries and departments. Moreover, ecological concerns and issues

have found prominent place among the academia resulting in the opening of new academic centres and institutions to study and analyze these issues and their impact on the environment and the people.

Sharma defines the concept of 'third world', highlighting the commonalities of the countries under this category in economic, political, cultural, and ecological terms. In terms of ecology, the similarities are the problems of desertification, deforestation, soil dègradation, and salinisation in the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. He highlights that, over the years, ecological problems have increased both in the developed and the developing countries, but the nature of problem varies. With the increase in ecological degradation there has been a corresponding increase in its awareness and concern. This has, in turn, led to widespread protests by aggrievèd communities and concerned citizens. Sharma cites the instances of Bhopal gas tragedy in 1984, nuclear disaster at Chernobyl in 1986, Alaskan oil spill from Exxon Valdez tanker in 1989, and the Gulf War in the early 1990s which were hazardous and undesirable happen-ings in the human history.

The other important issue Sharma mentions is the shift towards capitalist economy where profit motive has led to over-exploitation of nature. This has deepened the ecological crisis further. In this critical moment of history, the Earth Summit of 1992 held immense promise to deal with various issues to environment. However, in the Summit, conflicting interest between North and South became widely visible. While the northern states implicitly called for global ecology, where sustainable development should prevail, the southern nations stood for right to development and were averse to the idea of consumption pattern of the North.

Sharma's third important concern is with the problem of food security has taken a serious turn during the last two decades. Though, in India, the Green Revolution brought some solace, its social impact was uneven. Moreover, it has generated a number of ecological issues like threat to indigenous varieties of seeds, degradation of groundwater tables, etc. Citing the example of Tsunami in South and Southeast Asian countries in 2004, Sharma argues that natural disasters do not have national boundaries and calls for transnational effort for their solution.

To have a proper theoretical perspective, the author reviews the tradition of ecological thought and presents it in a tabular form starting from Arne Næss of 1973 to D. Pepper of 1996. He has discussed the theoretical underpinnings of 'theme of crisis', 'institutionalisation', 'sustainability', and 'knowledge system'. To him, these are the current dimensions of ecology. All these traditions of ecological thought are substantiated with justifiable theoretical models and lucid explanations.

Further exploring the theory and practice worldwide, Sharma classifies theories of ecological movements as neo-liberal, relative deprivation, resource mobilisation, collective behaviour, structural historical, cognitive practice, post-modern and post-structuralist, eco-centric, and critical disempowerment. However, in third world context, the ecological movements are basically concerned with issues of livelihoods, ecological sustainability, and social justice. The linkages between various dimensions of people's life-space have to be taken into account while analysing why people protest. Sharma concludes by projecting an alternative paradigm of development where the ultimate goal is to achieve and maintain the cultural identity of local people, collective self-empowerment, ecological stability and sustainability, equity, and justice-based society.

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Tulsi Patel: *Fertility behaviour: Population and society in a Rajasthan village* (2nd edition). New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006, xxxv + 287 pp., Rs 595 (hb). ISBN 978-0-19-568706-4

In the book under review, Tulsi Patel has successfully combined the anthropological, sociological, and demographical methods of research to highlight the societal factors and women's perceptions with regard to family formation. Her study of Mogra, a village in Rajasthan, reveals that fertility behaviour is an integral part of the complex social behaviour and family dynamics. An analysis of the cosmology of fertility and of family ideology illustrates that values and perceptions regarding sterility, fecundity, child birth, son preference, and gender discrimination are crucial in understanding the fertility behaviour of a couple in a traditional rural setting. For majority of them, children not only have an economic value, but also bring social prestige. They contribute to the enlargement of lineage, kinship, caste, and neighbourhood ties. Many demographic studies on fertility and family overlook this important dimension.

This study highlights some of the socio-cultural issues closely intertwined with fertility behaviour. It is a matter of shame for an elderly couple to have children even after the marriage of their grown up children. A pregnant grandmother is always subjected to criticism and ridicule even in a traditional rural society. According to Patel's observations, the modern contraceptive methods as promoted by the official family planning programme in India come under criticism from many

couples. The indigenous methods of birth control are easily accepted and practised by many before they show their willingness to accept the modern methods of family planning. The field-level investigation reveals that laparoscopy has received some acceptance in the study village compared to other methods of fertility regulation. This is mainly because, as Patel argues, laparoscopy is more suitable to the arduous labour the women of this village are usually engaged in. She also found that migration and the media have significantly influenced the changes in the marriage patterns and man-woman relations in her study community.

The major contribution of this work is the extensive discussion on the methodological and theoretical aspects in understanding fertility behaviour. By examining the fertility career of a couple in relation to different stages of the development of the household, this research provides very valuable insights. It is necessary to know that a woman passes through different types of household composition during her fertility career. Naturally, children are born and brought up partly in the joint and partly in the nuclear households. Patel also questions some of the widely prevalent views among Indian demographers. One commonly held hypothesis is that those who marry early are more likely to have higher fertility. The observations from Mogra show that, irrespective of age at marriage and duration of marital life, most mothers in the culmination stage of their fertility career have more or less the same number of children. Another commonly accepted view among the researchers is that women's employment status and income-generating activity increases their status, which, in turn, lowers their fertility. Patel questions this view and argues rather convincingly that woman's status in the village improves with her fertility and not with gainful employment. Motherhood integrates the daughter-in-law into the conjugal household. A mother of many children, particularly of the sons, is held in high esteem in village society compared to a childless woman. A barren woman is often ridiculed, humiliated and lives under constant threat of a possible second marriage by her husband in most patriarchal communities.

Through rigorous and intensive field work, this study provides very useful insights into the social, cultural, and symbolic aspects of human fertility. This study also highlights the limitations of survey research in understanding human behaviour and social attributes. The effective use of participant observation combined with analysis of village census, fertility histories of women, genealogies, and case studies provides us rich information and insights to understand the perceived and the actual fertility patterns and the value of children. Portraying a holistic perspective on fertility behaviour, this research study is a welcome

addition to the existing literature on anthropological demography of India.

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Virginius Xaxa: *State, society, and tribes: Issues in post-colonial India.* New Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2008, pp. 144, Rs 475. ISBN 8131721221

This book is refreshingly different from the innumerable studies on tribes and an equally large number of other publications on the subject; it puts forth original views and it is perhaps the most comprehensive work done so far on the subject. The canvas of the work is large, starting with weighing various definitions of the term 'tribe' and gradually delving into the matter and, in the process, removing the popular misconceptions that cloud the idea of tribal society and culture.

The book discusses the term 'tribe' and its transformation, tribal movements, the issues of empowerment and identity-crisis, the attainment of citizenship rights by tribal people, and their placement in Indian society, as also the discrimination they have been subjected to through ages. At the very beginning, Virginius Xaxa brings to light the inadequacies of different definitions of the term tribe. Article 342 (2) of the Indian constitution tells us, without any explanation, which ethnic groups are called tribes. Xaxa's discussion on this issue moves us out of our comfort zone of defining 'tribe'.

Xaxa throws light on the changes that are taking place within the tribal society like embracing Hinduism, leaving traditional professions like hunting, etc. It is debated whether the upward mobility of tribal society can be called 'sanskritisation', as the tribal people had never been part of the greater Hindu society. Or it can be the other way round: does a tribe cease to be a tribe the moment it opts for Hinduism? Xaxa argues that the belief that the tribes constitute indigenous people of India is not correct. The Nagas, the Kukis, the Mizos and a number of other clans settled in India much later than the non-tribal groups like the Oriyas and the Bengalis.

The writer tries to see the socio-economic and political conditions of tribes in India through the attainment of T.H. Marshall's 'citizenship rights': civic rights, political rights, and social rights. He argues that tribes enjoyed rights not so much in their capacity as members of a political community but in their capacity as members of a society.

Classification of tribal movements has been mainly done on the basis of geography, chronology, or at the best, in terms of issues. Xaxa warns us that movement classifications based on issues fail to capture the intricacies of tribal movements, as in movements organised and mobilised by tribal people, the issues are very wide: autonomy, identity, culture, sanskritisation etc., whereas when the movements are organised by outsiders or political parties, the issues are primarily related to livelihood.

The issues of empowerment, identity, and backwardness compared to other downtrodden groups of Indian society (the scheduled castes) have been raised in their proper perspective. Tribes were given more political power by the Indian constitution than they had enjoyed before. Tribes now enjoy three-tier autonomy at the levels of province, region and district. However, the problem here is that any law or regulation promulgated by the district councils if repugnant to any law made by the provincial legislature would be null and void. Thus, the benefits of the empowerment have not percolated to the people at the grassroots level, as provincial institutions are generally more bureaucratic and have a tendency to monopolise power. Despite the constitutional provisions, there have been aggressive incorporation of tribes into the language and religion of the dominant regional community. Xaxa's analysis of relative backwardness of tribes compared to the scheduled castes deserves mentioning: the scheduled castes are integral part of the dominant Hindu society; they are segregated by Hindu customs, while tribes have lived completely isolated from the dominant community. Being a part of the dominant society, the scheduled castes had more exposure than the tribes; moreover, they also speak the dominant language of the region. However, Xaxa argues that even this argument is not sufficient to analyze this issue unless we take into account the structural differences between tribal society and caste society, aspiration levels, and dependence and relation with nature.

The harmony between the natural and the social worlds that the tribes have maintained for centuries was ruptured first during the colonial period and then in post-colonial Forest Policy of 1952. Tribes were deprived of their traditional livelihood, culture, rituals, etc. without their consent to maintain an ideal 33 per cent of India's land under forest coverage. Xaxa rightly questions if the responsibility of preserving the sylvan stretch lies only with tribal people. However, the Forest Rights Act of 2006 gives back tribes their traditional rights over forests.

Xaxa's final chapter is on the gender inequality in tribal society. Here again, Xaxa proposes that the conventional belief that the tribal society is relatively egalitarian in regard to gender needs to be critically

studied with varying aspects of gender-status such as gender division of labour, inheritance of property, role in the decision making, and the different changes occurring in this relation through acculturation into the larger Indian society.

Throughout the book, Xaxa goes on moving the readers out of their comfort zones of set notions and pet beliefs by shattering the myths which have been cultivated through a very long time, and attempts at establishing an objective attitude towards the matter.

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SOCIOLOGICAL BULLETIN
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2. In the first instance, send only the hard copy of the typescript (two copies) If the article is accepted for publication, the contributor(s) will be required to send the soft copy of the article as an Email attachment processed on MSWord for Windows.

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7. Cite sentences or words taken from other works with single quotation marks; use double quotation marks only within quotations. Separate quotations exceeding fifty words from the text and indent them on the left. Unless the entire sentence is part of the quotation, the punctuation must remain outside the quotation marks.

8. Use British, rather than American, spellings (labour, not labor; programme, not program). Similarly, use 's', rather than 'z', in 'ise', 'ising', 'isation' words. Authors have latitude as regards italicisation, but italicisation needs to be consistent in the article.

9. Write numerals between one and ninety-nine in words, and 100 and above in figures. However, the following are to be in figures only: distance: 3 km; age: 32 years old; percentage: 64 per cent; and years: 1990s.

10. Contributors are required to provide on a separate sheet their name, designation, official address and Email ID. Only articles which have not been published earlier or which are not being considered for publication elsewhere will be entertained. A declaration to this effect must be included in the covering letter.

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